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THE PIPES AT LUCKNOW.

BY J. G. WHITTIER.

Dear to the Lowland reaper,
And plaided mountaineer—
To the cottage and the castle
The Scottish pipes are dear;
Sweet sounds the ancient pibroch
O'er mountain, loch, and glade;
But the sweetest of all music
The piper at Lucknow played.

Day by day the Indian tiger
Louder yelled, and nearer crept;
Round and round the jungle-serpent
Near and nearer circles swept.
"Pray for rescue, wives and mothers,
Pray to-day!" the soldier said;
"To-morrow, death's between us
And the wrong and shame we dread."

Oh! they listened, looked, and waited,
Till their hope became despair;
And the sobs of low bewailing
Filled the pauses of their prayer.
Then up spake a Scottish maiden,
With her ear unto the ground:
"Dinna ye hear it?—dinna ye hear it?
The pipes o' Havelock sound!"

Like the march of soundless music
Through the vision of the seer,
More of feeling than of hearing,
Of the heart than of the ear,
She knew the droning pibroch,
She knew the Campbells' call;
"Hark! hear ye not MacGregor's,
The bravest of them all!"

Oh! they listened dumb and breathless,
And they caught the sound at last;
Faint and far beyond the Goomtee
Rose and fell the piper's blast!
Then a burst of wild thanksgiving
Mingled woman's voice and man's;
"God be praised!—the march of Havelock!
The piping of the clans!"

Louder, nearer, fierce as vengeance,
Sharp and shrill as swords of strife,
Came the wild MacGregor clan-call,
Stinging all the air to life.
But when the far-off dust cloud
To plaided legion grew,
Full tenderly and blithesomely
The pipes of rescue blew!

Round the silver domes of Lucknow,
Moslem mosque and pagan shrine,
Breathed the air to Britons dearest,
The air of Auld Lang Syne.

The Snake-Charmer seemed to be a literal serpent museum, for the reptiles, upon hearing his peculiar call, came issuing from every portion of his clothing.

DOWLAH, THE SNAKE-CHARMER!

OR,

THE MAID OF CAWNPOOR!

A Mystery of India, beyond the Ganges.

BY ORPHINIA R. CHARNOCK.

CHAPTER I.

"All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
Are all but ministers of love,
And feed his sacred flame."

"Earth gives many shadowy glimpses of Paradise, but none quite so blissful as this."

Thus murmured young Captain Ned Livingston as he slowly paced the deck of the gallant ship Nautilus, with the lovely Cora Wilson clinging to his arm, gazing yearningly up into his handsome, manly face, while the tiny heels of her East India slippers kept time to his heavier tread.

It was moonlight on the Arabian Sea, and not a cloud obscured the glowing sky. There was just enough wind to fill the sails, as the Nautilus headed due north toward the Sunderbunds of the Ganges, the regular sinking and swelling of the waves scarcely disturbing the easy, graceful motion of the ship. The foam and spray, rippling from the bow, occasionally flung a faint mist upon the forward deck and stretched far away into a phosphorescent wake from the stern.

There appeared to be the faintest aroma, that came with the wind, as wafted by the spicy breezes from India, a soft, voluptuous beauty, like the Spirit of the East, seemed to pervade the atmosphere itself.

"And one day she will be mine," thought Ned, as he gazed upon the exquisitely beautiful face beside him. "This land of mystery and strange beauty would more befit her than even our own America."

The gentle breeze lifted the golden locks that flowed away over the shoulders and below the waist in silken waves, and from beneath the fluttering dress peeped the diminutive shoe, like some guarded jewel.

The Grecian head barely touched the shoulder of the manly form beside her, and the couple, as they moved forward over the deck, were the picture of delicate, spiritual beauty and sturdy, magnificent manhood—one the grand, strong tree; the other, the tender, clinging vine, drooping and dying without its support. And then as they paused at the gunwale and looked off over the vast deep, he hummed:

"See the mountains kiss the heaven,
And the waves clasp one another;
No sister flower would be forgiven,
If it disdained its brother.
And the sunlight clasps the earth,
And the moonbeams kiss the sea;
What are all these kissings worth,
If thou kiss not me?"

With the last words the head of the lover bent lower, and his lip touched the soft cheek of the lovely girl, whose high-strung rebellious soul had been conquered by the all-powerful, all-pervading passion, and whose starry eyes shone with all the fathomless love of woman's nature as she refused not the salute of the one who worshiped at her feet with all the ardor of the devotee of the Orient, who throws himself beneath the car of Juggernaut to propitiate the god he adores.

For a few minutes they stood in silent bliss, their thoughts unutterable and of each other. Finally, he murmured:

"They say the course of true love never ran smooth, but at least ours has. Two months ago we sailed out of the harbor of New York, bound for India. Your father placed you under my charge, with instructions to deliver you in Calcutta, from which place you are to make a visit to your friend Hattie, the missionary's wife at Cawnpoor, while I run down to Ceylon for the rest of my cargo. Then I am to call for you, and take you back again to our own dear native land, where I shall claim my bonnie bride, and she shall roam no more."

"You seem to have it all mapped out," replied the girl, as he pressed her closer to him. "If heaven so wills, it shall be as you say. But our journey is not half completed."

"I recall that," said her lover, as a strange chill shook his frame, "and sometimes a singular misgiving comes over me, caused, I have no doubt, by the rumors we have heard of the insurrection in India."

"Look!" she said, pointing downward over the gunwale.

Gazing down upon the comparatively smooth sea the razor-like fin of a shark was seen as he played near the ship, circling around and crossing the path with as much ease and celerity as if the vessel were at anchor.

"It is an idle dreamer who believes in omens," said Ned, as he felt his beloved tremble upon his arm. "Those sharks will follow a vessel for days, as you know they did us when we were down in the Indian Ocean. But I hate them myself, and Shelley is right when he calls them 'the hyenas of the sea.'"

Drawing his revolver he reached his arm downward and fired two shots in instant succession. There was a frenzied flash in the water as the wounded monster shot down into the depths. The captain replaced his weapon and said:

"If that be an augury of our life, let it be a true one. No sooner has it come than it has gone, and so we will believe that the future if it is to bring trouble is also to take it away again. Look, Cora, how beautiful!"

Just then the white sails of an outward-bound Indiaman came to view in the misty moonlight. Every stitch of canvas was spread, and the enormous hull careened to one side under the pressure of wind, and the foam bubbled away from her bows as if it were dashing through snowdrifts. Here and there a light twinkled upon its deck like a point of fire, and meeting in exactly opposite directions, the speed of the two vessels seemed doubled as they spoke, passed on, and were soon lost to view.

"At any rate our faith in each other shall remain forever the same," said Cora, looking up into the beaming countenance of her lover.

"God bless you, my dearest, it shall," was the reply.

"And our faith in heaven's goodness shall never depart from us?"

"Never," murmured Captain Ned, in a deep reverential voice, as he lifted his cap and looked up to the stars.

The hour was growing late, and escorting his beloved to her cabin, Captain Livingston lifted his hat with the grace and courtesy of a knight of the olden time, and looking fondly after her, until she had vanished from view, he turned to the sterner duties upon deck.

In about three weeks after the above conversation, their destination was reached, and at the earliest opportunity Livingston accompanied Cora to Calcutta.

The young American captain could not wonder at the expressions of delight which escaped his betrothed, as they neared this famous capital of the British dominions in the East.

Situated on the Hooghly, an arm of the Ganges, it presents a magnificent appearance when approached from the sea, with its elegant villas on each side of the river, the government botanical gardens, its numerous spires of churches and temples, and the powerful citadel of Fort William. Calcutta extends along the Ganges for a half dozen miles, with an average breadth of two miles. A handsome quay, known as the Strand, embanks the river for half the length of the city, and is furnished with thirty ghauts, or landing places. The river is fully a mile in width, and is crowded with shipping from all parts of the world. The Europeans live principally in the Chouringhee suburb of the city, at Garden Reach, in beautiful and detached villas. Fort William is not only the strongest and most complete fortress in India, but also in the British dominions, requiring ten thousand men for its full garrison.

Calcutta has been appropriately called the "City of Palaces," and when Cora Wilson was escorted up the famous esplanade by her lover, she was enthusiastic in her praises, and was certain that it was the most beautiful city upon which she had been permitted to look.

Having apprised her friend Hattie of her coming, there was no delay nor disappointment. The young wife was prevented from coming to Calcutta, on account of her newly born infant, but she sent several faithful servants to accompany her guest up the Ganges to Cawnpoor, and they were at the hotel awaiting the coming of the young lady, when the latter reached the designated place of meeting.

CHAPTER II.

"His princess parts with a prophetic sigh—
Unwilling parts, and oft reverts her eye,
That dreamed at every look."

Cora Wilson sat in a retired nook in the parlor of her hotel at Calcutta, her thoughts busy; joy tinged with sadness, filling her soul.

Hattie Dickson, the wife of the missionary at Cawnpoor, was the dearest friend of her youth. They had been playmates from infancy, and Cora had given her promise, when they separated two years before, that this visit should be paid before she settled down as the wife of the handsome, brave Ned Livingston.

And here she had come all the way from the other side of the world in fulfillment of that promise, and a flutter of pleasure went through her affectionate bosom, as she recalled that in a few days they would be in each other's arms.

"Darling good Hattie," she murmured to herself, "she was always a better girl than I, and went as cheerfully with her husband to India as if it was no more than a dozen miles from home. And her babe, she tells me in her letter, is the sweetest cherub that ever came to make heaven in a mother's household."

Once more she opened the missive with a pleased smile, and read the closing words.

"*And what name do you suppose I have given our little angel? What name could I give it, but that of Cora Wilson Dickson; and so, my best of friends, lose no time in hastening to Cawnpoor to see the light of the household, and the sweetest of earth.*"

Cora read over this characteristic message once or twice, and then folded it up and gave way to her pleasant reveries.

"How like her, and the nearer I approach Cawnpoor, the more anxious I am to see her. I am more impatient to see Hattie to-day than I was when I sailed out of New York. Only one thing causes me sadness; I wish Ned could go with me."

There was the woman's nature asserting itself. She loved her true, loyal hero with such an all-absorbing love, that her future joy was mingled with present pain at the thought of the long time they were to be separated from each other.

"But I see no way in which it can be helped," she added, with a sigh; "but here he comes now."

Just then the familiar form of Captain Ned appeared. Taking a seat beside her he finally clasped her tiny hand in his.

"And so to-morrow you expect to go?" he said, in a low voice, in which there was a perceptible effort to conceal his emotion.

"Yes, to-morrow, dear Ned. All my arrangements are completed. Hattie's servants will call here early in the morning, and by nightfall I expect to be well on my way to Cawnpoor."

"I suppose, Cora, that your heart is set upon this journey?"

"I would have hardly come so many miles, for any other reason."

"I thought possibly that I might have been a slight attraction," said the lover, in a piqued voice.

"So you were, Ned, and the only thing that troubles me now, is the thought that we shall be separated for six long weeks."

"I am satisfied that if you go, we shall *never* meet again in this world," said the captain, looking her steadily in the face, and speaking almost in a whisper.

"Why do you say that?" she demanded, shudderingly.

"I have made particular inquiries in official quarters, and my very worst fears about this Indian mutiny are more than confirmed. It first broke out in the province of Delhi, near the head waters of the Ganges, and is raging at this moment all the way down the valley, from Lahore, Delhi, Agra, and even to Benares."

Cora was a little indignant at the words and manner of her lover. He had intimated several times that he considered it very imprudent for her to attempt this journey in the unsettled condition of the country, until she began to think that his fears and imaginings were interfering unwarrantably with his better judgment.

And now when she was awakened from her reverie of her absent friend, by a more direct hint, that it was his wish she should give up her intended visit, her proud heart rebelled. She waited until he had concluded his hurried statements and then quietly asked:

"Well?"

"You say *well* when it could not be more *ill*. The war office is in constant receipt of telegrams, from those points in the valley of the Ganges, with which they have communications of the most alarming nature. There is danger even at Barrackpoor, only sixteen miles away. Under these circumstances Hattie cannot expect you, nor can you be so foolish as to think of going."

"But Hattie does expect me, and what is more, I shall start to-morrow morning."

"It cannot be!" exclaimed the captain, rising to his feet, in amazement; "surely, you have more sense than to think of such a proceeding."

"You have done a great deal to thwart this visit of mine," said the girl, rising, words which afterwards cost her many a tear and pang; "and now you are more determined than ever."

"If you suspect the truth of what I tell you, ask some one in whom you have more confidence," replied Captain Ned, drawing himself up with offended dignity.

"I do not mean that," said Cora, who even in her anger could not permit her lover to be under such a misapprehension, "but you magnify the danger."

"That amounts to precisely the same thing. I will take you to the war office, and make inquiries, and you shall hear the answers, and then do as you think best."

"It is unnecessary, for it would not change my purpose. I shall have a good escort, and Hattie's husband is too much like her, for either of them to be in danger, no matter what comes."

"Well, I must go, good-night. I'll give you time to reflect upon the folly of your course; in the morning you will probably see things in a different light," said Ned, as he angrily picked up his cap.

"I will then see your present fears in the same light as I do now," she replied, rather coldly, and without looking toward him. He affecting to hear her not, passed rapidly out of the hotel and was gone.

CHAPTER III.

"I hear from the depths of the river
Sweet words that my spirit thrill;
We are parted, but not forever;
We are living and loving still."

Captain Ned, as he was familiarly known among his friends, was sauntering along one of the beautiful streets of Calcutta, in the European quarter, with the softened sounds of music, and the laughter of voices, and the plash of fountains in his ears, while he thoughtfully smoked his cigar, and asked himself whether there was not some means by which he could extricate his betrothed from the peril into which he believed she was going, before she should proceed so far that all escape would be hopeless.

"Well," he muttered, "I can only wait, and hope, and pray for her safe return."

Thus occupied and absorbed with his own thoughts, he wandered along until he was well out among the suburbs, where the pedestrians were fewer in number, and where he was more at liberty to indulge his fancies and imaginings to their fullest bent. He had sauntered along in this manner for some distance, and with no thought of danger, but with his senses full about him, when he heard a soft, rustling sound in the shrubbery which grew upon the right of the path, and he turned his head with some fear. For some time he could see nothing, although the suspicious rustling continued, but all at once, a dark line appeared upon the graveled walk before him, and one glance showed an immense cobra-di-capello, less than six feet distant, with head erect, and apparently on the very point of burying its deadly fangs in him. With an involuntary gasp of terror, he sprang back, drawing his revolver, with the purpose of shattering the hooded head, but ere he could take aim and fire, a raven-like hand suddenly closed upon his arm, holding it with the grip of a vice.

"S—s—s! Sahib, harm him not."

"Who are you, and what do you mean by stopping me from shooting such a loathsome pest as that?" demanded the American, retreating further from the reptile, and feeling about as ready to shoot the one intruder as the other.

"He is mine, I love him much, Sahib."

"Then why do you let him loose to creep along the path like this, ready to bury his fangs in whoever comes near him."

"Has he hurt you—has he bit you?"

"No; but he came devilish near it. If I hadn't heard him just when I did, and leaped back, he would have finished me."

"No, Sahib, he will not bite, unless I tell him to bite, and I was silent when he toyed with you. I would not have spoken, but to check you from hurting him. I have many such pets in my home at Cawnpoor, and I carry some with me."

"O! you are one of those monstrosities called snake charmers, more repulsive if anything, than the reptiles you take to your bosom. Well, all I have to say, is, that I don't understand your taste, and don't want to, and I will take it as a favor that you will take both your horrid pet and yourself out of my path."

The Asiatic whom he had been addressing was a tall, sinewy man, with a face as black as that of an African eunuch. His head was swathed in a heavy, crimson turban, his coat was short, gaudily colored and somewhat resembling that worn by ordinary sailors; while he wore the baggy breeches and sandals, that are still frequently seen in portions of India. In the moonlight and shadow, little could be distinguished of his face, except its general outlines. Once or twice, when speaking, he smiled in such a way as to show his teeth; long, white and gleaming like those of the jungle tigers. He was over six feet in height, and Captain Ned knew, without that steel-trap-like clutch upon his arm to remind him, that he was possessed of enormous strength and wonderful activity.

As he uttered the words spoken above, he gave utterance to the same peculiar hissing sound which had escaped him, when first addressing the American, and immediately two or three serpents, smaller than the cobra but probably equally venemous, issued from the ample folds of his shirt around his body, and began crawling over and around his neck, head and shoulders, while his velvety hands followed and caressed them continually, with a sinuous, winding, wavy motion, not unlike the movements of the reptiles themselves. In the meantime, the big fellow on the ground had crawled back among the luxuriant shrubbery and was no more seen; but Captain Ned, still distrustful of the deadly creature, took care to place a good distance between him and its shelter, and although he shoved his revolver back in its place, he kept his hand upon it in such a manner that he could jerk it out in an instant, if necessary; for he could not relieve himself of the impression that he stood upon dangerous ground, where he needed to have all his wits about him to escape the sudden death characteristic of this strange land and people.

There was nothing about the Snake-Charmer to attract, but everything to repel, and Captain Ned Livingstone would have passed him by without further thought or notice, but for one word that the Asiatic had pronounced—"Cawnpoor," and it will be remembered that he had remarked in the most incidental manner that he had more serpents at his home in that city.

This remark had arrested the attention of the lover at once, for he could not but feel the greatest interest in the city in which Cora expected to spend several weeks, surrounded, as he believed, by peril upon every hand.

"You told me that your home was in Cawnpoor," he said. "How long ago were you in that city?"

"It is scarcely two weeks since I left there and came down the Ganges to the

City of Palaces, where I have been but three days only."

"When do you go back?

"I am on my way there now. The distance is long, but Dowlah travels by night as well as day, and the sun will set but few times when he will be there."

These few words of the Asiatic made the captain the more anxious to cultivate his acquaintance, but he could not bear the thought of going near him so long as he kept those loathsome serpents around him. So he said:

"You seem to have your pets well trained. Can you leave them in the shrubbery here while you go away for awhile?"

"I could leave them for a month, and find them upon my return."

"Will you leave them for half an hour, if you please—that is, let these serpents crawl off in the bushes, and stay there till you return? I have something very particular to say to you."

Dowlah, as he announced himself to be, did not show any curiosity to hear what the white man had to say, and it was not until the request was repeated, that he proceeded to comply with it.

The Snake-Charmer seemed to be a literal serpent museum, for the reptiles, upon hearing his peculiar call, came issuing from every portion of his clothing, and, as if they understood every word uttered by their master, they crept away into the bushes, there to remain, as he declared, until he should call them forth again. When he stated that he had no more about him, Captain Ned ventured to approach closer than he had done before, and they walked away side by side.

Dowlah proved to be a good listener; for he never once opened his mouth while the American was speaking, making no inquiries, but content simply to hear the story. Captain Ned, seeing no other way of meeting the difficulty, told the truth frankly and unreservedly, concluding by a request that the Sepoy should follow Cora at once to Cawnpoor, and use his utmost endeavors to benefit her and the missionary family whom she was visiting, and to leave no means untried to extricate them from their perilous position while time remained in which to do so.

Of course the captain knew that there was but one way that the native could be induced to do this, and that was by the offer of a large reward. Accordingly he promised him five hundred golden rupees (a sum equal to about thirty-five hundred dollars) upon his delivering in Calcutta the party or Cora herself. He pledged himself, as a guaranty of his earnestness, to deposit that sum with any East India banker Dowlah might select, making known the conditions upon which it was to be paid over. This was the most that Ned could do, and not a little to his surprise his proposition was accepted at once.

"The journey is long," said he, quietly, "and it will take weeks, but I will do it. She shall be delivered in the City of Palaces before two weeks have come and gone. I will take the word of the Sahib, and ask no other security. When I pass over to him the idol of his heart, then he may pay me—but not before."

The lover was delighted, for it was a great rebound from the depression of spirits under which he had been laboring. He explained, perhaps more than was necessary, what he wished done, and repeated his offer of reward, and then questioned him regarding the state of the country in the mutinous districts. He was disposed to be reticent upon the latter subject, and Ned dropped it, coming back again to the question which was uppermost in his mind.

The interview lasted about half an hour, and had carried the two men well out upon the suburbs of the city. A certain vague uneasiness still troubled the American—a feeling of unrest for which he was unable fully to account. There was an impression with him that the action of the Snake-Charmer was not exactly what it should be. It seemed that he had consented too readily, he had asked too few questions, and, knowing as he did the treacherous nature of these people, he could not rid himself of a strong suspicion that the fellow was playing a trick with him. Why he should do so he could not conjecture, but the suspicion remained with him none the less.

But, as there was no pretext under which the interview could be continued, and as Dowlah showed a disposition to end it, the two turned about and began retracing their steps, Ned going over again the plans which it seemed to him best should be pursued for the safety of Cora and her friends; while the Sepoy listened in the same grave, immobile manner, until both suddenly ceased talking at the sound of footsteps behind them.

Turning his head, Ned saw three men walking along, with the careless, reckless fashion of those who were full of wine. There was still enough moonlight to see that they were British sailors. They were talking rather boisterously together, and apparently laughing at some escapade in which they had been recently engaged. Their conversation was plentifully garnished with oaths, and the captain felt an instinctive apprehension of trouble as they drew near. He stepped upon the outer and Dowlah on the inner side of the walk, when they were within a few feet, so as to give them an abundance of room.

"Hello! what have we here?" demanded the large man, who seemed to be an officer, as he peered from the face of one man to the other, he being directly between them.

"This chap is one of the Sepoys," replied another of the men, who was impudently crowding the Snake-Charmer against the fence. "The whole caboodle ought to be blowed from the mouths of Havelock or Campbell's cannons."

"And this 'ere individual is a burglar, I'll warrant."

As he spoke, the sailor stretched out his broad hand to grasp the shoulder of Captain Livingston, but the moment he reached out, the latter dealt him a violent blow in the face that sent him, dazed and bewildered, staggering back against the fence. This served as a signal for a most desperate fight, in which the whole five were almost instantly engaged. The inoffensive Sepoy, standing quietly against the fence waiting for the noisy individuals to pass on, suddenly received a terrible blow in the face, that set the blood streaming, and really deprived him of his senses for a few seconds.

"Keep back," called the one who had struck him, as his companion moved up to his assistance, "I'm going to finish this one myself; you 'tend the funeral of that other chap."

Captain Ned, finding he was in for it, let out with all the skill and power at his command. The officer that had returned to the assault upon him, was a lusty opponent of ponderous weight and strength, but he could not compare with the captain in point of swiftness and science, and before he comprehended what was really going on, he was placed completely *hors du combat*, eyes blinded with blood, and head ringing with pain.

It was done so quickly that his companions did not come to his assistance until he ceased to need it, and this gave Ned an opportunity to turn his full force upon the second, who now came to aid his superior, but soon found himself in an equally bad plight. The condition of both men, from their severe punishment and semi-intoxicated condition was such that they remained upon the ground in a sort of dazed condition, while Captain Ned rushed to the assistance of the Snake-Charmer, with whom it was going very ill; for knowing nothing of the science of fisticuffs, he was completely at the mercy of the brute, who acted as if he really meant to pound him to death.

Dowlah had been stunned by the first shock, and the sudden attack being quickly followed by a shower of cruel blows, so that, when Captain Ned had disposed of his opponents and turned to help him, he saw a dark figure crouching helplessly against the fence, and a powerful English sailor hammering him with fearful effect,

"You're a coward," thundered Ned, as he leaped toward him, "don't you see that that fellow can't help himself?"

The sailor seemed to comprehend his new danger, for he turned, and without putting himself on the defensive, instantly charged upon the American, in a manner that caused the latter to feel that he had now to deal with the most dangerous and least intoxicated of their assailants. Ned paused a minute, until in a certain sense he could take his measure, when he aimed at his face; the blow was cleverly avoided, and before it could be returned or repeated, there was a rush and several exclamations, and ere they really knew what was coming, the whole party of whites were in the hands of the police; the Asiatic having slipped away like a shadow, and the officers finding it was useless to attempt to follow him, started away for the station house with their captives.

Ned noticed that the leader of the sailors was in close conversation with the one who seemed to be the leader of the police; and they had not gone far, when there was another rush, and the three sailors broke from their captors, plunged away, and soon disappeared. A couple of the officers made a feint of pursuing, but it was such a palpable deception, that, after following them for a short distance, they returned.

Understanding the success of this manœuvre, Captain Ned offered a handsome bribe to the one who held his arm, if he would let him go. That officer said "all right," and took the money, but when the prisoner attempted to escape he was not permitted, and he was compelled to accompany his captors to the station.

There he was locked up—compelled to remain all night, and in the morning was given a hearing. The result was, that after the payment of a heavy fine and given a warning, he was permitted to go his way in peace.

CHAPTER IV.

Down to the gulfs of the soul they go
Where the passion fountains burn.

The day succeeding the events just narrated was one when the sky seemed aflame with fervent heat. At the noontide hour, scarcely any one in Calcutta, not native born, has the temerity to venture upon the street. Sun-stroke comes with the suddenness of lightning, and even the toughened seaman, who has defied the elements in all parts of the world, and whose reckless disregard of danger is proverbial, dreads to expose himself to such deadly peril.

Toward evening three individuals might be seen seated on the shaded piazza of one of the hotels, their position a lazy, lolling one, while they listlessly puffed their cigars, like men upon whose hands the time hung rather heavily. Two of them carried faces much bruised and swollen, that gave evidence of a recent struggle; the third, however, showed not the slighest scratch or memento of the affray of the evening before, in the assault upon Captain Livingston. They had been laughing over the manner in which they bribed the policemen to permit them to slip away, and what an annoying night had doubtless fallen to the lot of Americans, when the unharmed sailor asked:

"Do you know what I'm thinking of, mates?"

The two replied that they did not, and some remark was made about the weather being too sultry and oppressive to think of anything.

"I think, from the manner in which I sailed into that Sepoy that I finished him. I shouldn't wonder if he has crawled away somewhere and turned up his toes and died. Helloa! What does this mean?"

This exclamation was caused by the sight of a native East Indian, clothed in the suit of his people, with his body and neck also wrapped around by a rich cashmere shawl, the turban on his head descending so low upon one side of his face, as partly to conceal his dusky features. The eyes of the three sailors were turned curiously toward him, as he was seen to bear a wonderously beautiful boquet in his hand. Glancing from one to the other, as if to make sure of the identity of his man, he advanced straight to the last speaker and handed the bunch of flowers to him, with a smile that showed his long, white, tiger-like teeth.

"Helloa! how much is that?" demanded the pleased sailor, taking it in one hand, while he felt in his pocket with the other.

"It is nothing; it was sent thee by a fair lady, who forbids me to say even that much. Ask me no questions," said the Sepoy, somewhat impatiently, as the man attempted to detain him, "for I shall not speak another word."

"Give my beautiful unknown, then, my love and my thanks," called out the recipient of the gift, as the dusky fellow left the piazza and vanished.

Laughter and jest followed this little affair, and the man holding the orientally beautiful bouquet in his hand, looked admiringly at it for a few minutes, listening in the meanwhile to the badinage of his companions, when he exclaimed:

"By Jove, but isn't it fine? Don't you catch the fragrance where you are sitting. I must take an extra whiff myself."

As he raised it to his nostril, he suddenly threw his head up, with the words:

"Thunder; but there's a sharp thorn there! It felt like the point of a needle that took me on the tip of my nose."

The others would have laughed, had not they both caught sight of a small glittering line that shot out from the heart of the boquet, darting back so quickly that it seemed more like the flash of a crimson ray than anything else. The man who felt the sting saw it not, and still believed he had been punctured by some sharp thorn, until one of his companions said:

"I believe there is something among those flowers; don't put it to your face again till you make sure."

Although but a few seconds had elapsed since receiving the sting, the victim felt a strange, peculiar pain spreading through his face and head, and with an exclamation of terror he sprang to his feet, dashed the bouquet to the ground, and, gnashing his teeth, crushed it beneath his heel. As he did so a serpent, covered with crimson flecks and scarcely as large as his finger, glided out, with head erect and tiny arrow-tongue darting forth.

One of the men stamped it under his heel. The sailor staggered back like a drunken man, extending both hands outwards and groping around as if vaguely searching for something.

"Lead me, boys," he said in a pitiful tone, "I am blind."

His companions sprang to his assistance and conducted him into the hotel. A messenger was at once despatched for a native doctor living near by and celebrated for his skill, but when he reached the hotel, a few minutes later, the British sailor had sunk into a stupor, from which none of his friends could arouse him. The physician hastily gave him something, and after hearing the story of his comrades, stepped out upon the piazza and looked at the crushed serpent, which a servant was in the act of removing. One glance only, and he shook his head.

"Sahib will be ready for burial within an hour," he said, coming back to where the victim lay, his face swollen and speckled in a frightful manner. "There is no hope for him. He has been bitten by the most venomous serpent in India; a needle-point of its poison under the skin will kill the strongest man. I can cure all snake-bites except *that*, which none but Mahomet himself can subdue."

The words of the native physician were speedily verified. Nothing was sufficient to arouse the sailor from his stupor, and in less than an hour he was dead.

After the payment of the fine and his release from confinement, Captain Ned Livingston hastened back to the hotel in the hope that Cora had not yet departed for Cawnpoor, and that, having forgotten the coolness in which they parted, would be anxiously awaiting his return. Upon arriving at the hotel he found she had left hours before under an escort which would not wait, and was well on her way to Cawnpoor. His disappointment was great, and blaming himself for having left her at all, with a heavy heart he returned to his vessel, his orders being to set sail at once for Ceylon and procure his cargo. He had made careful search for the Snake-Charmer, for he felt he must communicate again with him before his departure, but he could neither hear nor learn a word of his mysterious companion of the evening before.

Upon reaching the Nautilus, however, he found that the first mate and several of the crew were ashore, with no expectation of returning until nightfall, so that he was compelled to wait until then before weighing anchor and starting on his voyage down the Indian Ocean.

It was just growing dusk, and the captain stood on deck, leaning upon the gunwale, and looking off toward the beautiful city of Calcutta, his thoughts with her who by this time was so many miles up the treacherous Ganges, when his attention was attracted by a small boat, which suddenly came round from under the bow. As he glanced down at it, he observed that it contained but a single occupant, who to his surprise, was the very individual for whom he had been searching: Dowlah, the Snake-Charmer.

The Sepoy looked up and smiled; and came up the vessel's side as nimble as a monkey.

Captain Ned extended his hand, as he approached, and scrutinized his swarthy countenance, upon which was still to be seen traces of the terrible beating he had received the night before.

"I am glad you look so well," said Captain Ned. "I have been searching for you to-day, and was afraid that you had suffered some great injury."

The black eyes of the Asiatic gave out a ferocious gleam, as he answered:

"That evil man will harm no one again."

"What do you mean?" asked the captain, uncertain whether he really understood the significant remark.

"He is dead. I handed him a bouquet this afternoon. He placed it to his nose, and the serpent, whose bite no one can cure, stung him. I placed it among the flowers myself, and the evil man took them from my hand, and he lives no longer."

Something like a shudder passed over the frame of the American captain. He could understand the congeniality that must always exist between such a treacherous creature and the serpents which he petted and kept about him. But if these East Indians are natural-born traitors, they are not all incapable of gratitude, and Dowlah proceeded to tell a story which filled his listener with amazement. He said that on the previous night, when he made the bargain with the American to go to Cawnpoor, with the intention of befriending the beloved of his heart, and if possible, those whom she had gone to visit, he did not purpose ever to go to Cawnpoor, at all! As to why he indulged in this deliberate deception, he did not explain, nor did the captain attempt to question him; for he supplemented the foregoing with the declaration that he was now going to start up the Ganges within an hour; his sole purpose being to do his utmost to faithfully carry out the deceptive engagement of the night previous.

Dowlah consented to explain why it was that he had made this change in his plans. If the Sahib had not come to his relief, at the very moment he did, the Snake-Charmer was very certain that he would have been beaten to death by the sailor.

As soon as he was free to do so, he cleared out; and having attended to his pets, his next duty was to arrange a plan for revenging himself upon the man who had so brutally and causelessly beaten him.

We have shown how completely he succeeded in the terribly ingenious means employed. When this was completed, the thought of gratitude came to him, and he sought out Captain Livingston, the one who had befriended him at the crisis, when he was in such sore need of a friend, and here he was ready to lay down his life for him.

Dowlah proceeded then to state his plan more fully: He said he should make all haste up the Ganges, until he reached Cawnpoor, when he meant to search out the three persons mentioned, and do his utmost to get them out of the country as soon as possible. He declared that it would be perfectly useless to attempt to reach Calcutta with them, as such a journey, seven hundred miles in extent, would lead them through the very heart of the mutinous districts. Instead, therefore, he meant to go two or three hundred miles to the south, his purpose being, by means of such a long overland journey, to strike the coast at or near the month of Mahamuddy river. Five weeks from that date he wished the captain to come north from Ceylon, and to spend several days in cruising off and on in the coast.

Dowlah promised that he would not keep him waiting long, for he would be there very near the date mentioned, either with or without the fugitives. He described the coast so minutely, at this point, that Captain Ned was certain he could not miss it, even if unable to guide himself by the position of the river mentioned.

The Snake-Charmer spent about half an hour with the chief officer of the brig, who placed a letter for Cora in his charge, and then just as the twilight was deepening into darkness, he let himself down the side, dropped into his little boat, and disappeared.

Within a short time the mate and rest of the sailors had returned, and by daylight the next morning, the Nautilus was heading south, fairly out upon the Indian Ocean, as she sped on her way toward the port of Colombo, in Ceylon.

And the Snake-Charmer, what of him and his deadly pets? and sweet, Cora Wilson, surrounded by a foe no less deadly and treacherous? as they pursue their way up the historic Ganges.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

LOOKING UNDER THE BED.

BY A. EVERGREEN.

It is the habit of many persons to take a look under the bed before retiring for the night. Mrs. Evergreen, my beloved wife, indulges, if indulgence it can be called, in this peculiar practice. I do not object to it in the least, so long as she does not enforce the performance upon myself; but when, as is sometimes the case, she forgets it until she has put out the light and ensconced herself under the comforter, then it is hard that I, who am not troubled with nervous apprehensiveness, should have to get out into the cold and do it for her. I have often remarked to Mrs. Evergreen, when I have seen her prying under the bed, that it was a silly habit, and that the sooner she gave it up the better. To this gentle admonition my better-half invariably rejoins:

"La, Evergreen! what harm does it do? It's a kind of satisfaction to know that nobody's under the bed, and then I don't think of such a horrible thing after I'm in bed."

"I think, my dear, you might just as well pursue your investigations further and look into the bureau-drawers and clothes-basket."

"Evergreen," she will rejoin, "don't mention the idea, or I shall certainly do it. Come to think of it, a man could very easily get into the clothes-basket!"

"Certainly he could, my dear, quite as easily as Falstaff. You should certainly include the clothes-basket, and, by-the-bye, there's the chimney; why not look up that as well?"

"Now, Evergreen, you are laughing at me. But I can't leave off the habit, and never will. It's a comfort for me to know that there's nothing wrong about it, and I don't see why you should deprive me of it."

So under the bed goes the candle, and, no signs of humanity being discovered, Mrs. Evergreen is able to repose in peace. But, as already supposed, this precautionary act is sometimes forgotten, and I am myself obliged to rise, light the lamp and report. I've done it more frequently of late than is agreeable, and have intimated as much to Mrs. E. She says:

"Very well, Evergreen, I'll do it myself."

But this procedure is almost as bad, for she invariably lets the cold in on me both in getting out and getting in. If it were not for increasing the mental idiocyncrasy on the part of Mrs. Evergreen, by giving her some good reason to apprehend danger, I should relate to her what I am about to lay before the reader. In this narration, therefore, I ask the public more particularly to bear in mind that Mrs. Evergreen is of a sensitive nature, rather apprehensive and slightly superstitious, and what I have to say must under no circumstances be mentioned to her. If for two-and-twenty years (that is the period of our wedded life, and happy years have they been)—if, I say, I have for this long period refrained from imparting the matter to the beloved sharer of my joys and partaker of my sorrows, surely the public (which, as you know, always does keep a secret) will keep mine.

All young men, I suppose, have love affairs, before they eventually fix their affections on one who is to bless their lot in life. I know that I had and I don't regret it. Regret it? far from it. Mrs. Evergreen is not present, and therefore I have no hesitation in saying that if I had to live my life over again I'd like to go through with the same sentimental experience, particularly if it was to be succeeded by again leading to the hymenial altar the present Mrs. Evergreen.

I was not bad looking when I was in my twenties. I think I may go further and confidently say that "Gus Evergreen" was a decided favorite among the girls of Oakville, and I really believe that I could have had any of them "for the asking." As I before remarked, Mrs. Evergreen is not present, and I indulge my thoughts somewhat more freely than would otherwise be the case. I don't think that I cared particularly for any of the Oakville girls, however, and I might have kept my heart whole to this day if it had not been for the circumstance which I am about to relate.

Fred Evans, who had been my chum at school, came to make a visit at Oakville "for a day or two," as he said, when he came; but he made it a week or two easily enough after I'd taken him about a little among the "young ladies." When that time had expired, Fred said he really must go, as he didn't know what his father and mother would think of his long absence; but it ended in his relieving their anxiety by a letter and sending for his trunks. I knew how the matter was perfectly well, and that Belle Bronson had bewitched him out of his five senses. Fred used to put it to the "country air and the quiet which was benefitting his health," etc.; but it was no use trying to deceive me, and I told him so. Then he owned up frankly, and I promised to help him all I could, if he required any help, in the prosecution of his suit. I never thought Belle a flirt, or that she would willingly distress any human being; but she had a way of looking into one's eyes, as if to captivate them for her mere personal amusement. At any rate she had a larger share of beaux than any of the other girls; but all their attentions came to nothing. I feared it might be so with Fred Evans, and warned him accordingly; but Fred said he'd "have her, if he tried all his life;" that "she was the only living being who had ever awakened a real emotion in his breast," etc., etc.

After that I said no more, but closely observed the lovers, and soon came to the conclusion that Fred was by no means disagreeable to her. Things went on in this way without any definite result until Fred received a sudden summons home on account of his mother's illness. When he came back to renew his visit he insisted upon staying at the Oakville Hotel, rather than wear out his welcome at our house, and finding remonstrances unavailing there he went.

The landlord (honest old Downsbury—I wonder if he yet lives) gave Fred, at my suggestion, his best bedroom, "No. 20"—I am particular in mentioning the number.

"He shall have No. 20," said Downsbury. "Any friend of yours, Master Augustus, shall have the best I have to give as long's I'm landlord."

It was a pleasant room, looking out on the distant hills and the beautiful winding branch of the Blackwater; but what cared Fred for scenery? he was in the hands of the blind god, and could not see even as far as his nose, except in the direction of Belle's cottage. I used to go over to Fred's room and smoke my cigar, while he, poor wretch, expatiated on his sufferings, doubts and solicitudes. Did she love him? that was the question which disturbed every moment of his existence, and to which, with the closest reasoning, he could not bring himself a satisfactory reply. Sometimes he thought a word or a sign settled the point beyond a doubt in his favor; at others he fancied he read a coolness and indifference in her eyes. In this condition of uncertainty he dared not press the question, lest a hasty step might bring him to grief.

At Fred's earnest solicitation, I promised to sound Belle as to her sentiments, if a favorable opportunity presented itself, or at any rate to let her know that Fred was languishing in distress on her account, and thus give her no excuse for unnecessarily prolonging his misery. It so happened, however, that my services were not called into requisition. Belle Bronson, because of the sudden arrival at her house of some country cousins, was obliged to give up her room—her mother's cottage being a small one—and to occupy, for a single night, a room at the hotel. We would cheerfully have offered her guests accommodation at our house, but we were in the same predicament. An agricultural fair in the village had brought many strangers in the place, and our own guests were so numerous that I had given up my room to two of them, and had intended asking Fred Evans to let me pass the night with him.

For this purpose I went to the hotel at a late hour, and proceeded at once to Fred's room, but to my surprise found no one there. I did not even notice that his trunk was gone, or suspect the fact, which afterwards became apparent, that "to oblige some lady guest for the night only," as the landlord expressed it, Fred had consented to give up "No. 20" and occupy a small room in the rear of the building. The gas being turned up I took a book to await his return, and, hearing at last what appeared to be steps approaching the room, and supposing it to be Fred, in a momentary impulse to play a joke on him I slipped under the bed, a large and high one, intending to imitate a cat (of which animal I knew he had a detestation) as soon as he entered the room. The door opened, and I was on the point of indulging in my ventriloquial faculty by giving a long-drawn *meeow*, when from my hiding-place I beheld Belle Bronson take quiet possession of the apartment.

My astonishment was so great, and the sense of mortification so intense, that I did not, as I should have done, make myself immediately known to her. Thus the opportunity for explanation and discovery was lost. I dared not move a hair, but hoped sincerely that some excuse might take her out of the room for a moment, and so facilitate my escape. She, however, locked the door, removed the key, and, as I knew by the sound, prepared to retire. Finally, she kneeled down beside the bed, and clasping her hands and bowing her head (so fearfully near to mine that I could hear the soft words in my very ear), she offered up her evening prayer in a manner so full of feeling, and with such accents of womanly tenderness and devotion, that I felt as if she was an angel bending over the vilest of mortals. That prayer won my heart; but one portion went *through* it, and held it captive. Never shall I forget my feelings of surprise and deep emotion when I heard her utter these words: "Bless my dear mother, sisters and friends; bless all around me, and, oh, God! bless him I love, Augustus Evergreen, and shower down Thy mercies over him! Amen." "Ah, Augustus!" said my divinity to herself, as she rose from her devotional attitude, "if you but knew that I named your very name in my prayers, you would be less indifferent to me!"

If I breathed short before, after this my breath seemed to desert me entirely, and I verily thought that the beating of my heart would betray me. Belle, pure as an angel to me then and white as a snow-flake, proceeded to turn off the gas and get into bed. I felt her soft pressure over my head, and shrunk closer and closer to the hard floor upon which I was extended. What thoughts rushed through my brain! Above me lay a young and unsophisticated girl, wholly unconscious that the one she loved lay so closely to her, and who had for the first time been made aware of her interest in him by hearing words which she supposed went only to Heaven! I knew then that the night must pass away, and the morning come, and that Belle must first leave the apartment before I could venture to change even my position.

Belle had been perfectly motionless for several minutes, and was, I flattered myself, losing herself in sleep, when suddenly she exclaimed to herself: "There—I haven't looked under the bed!" A horror ran through me; all is lost; what should I do? Belle rose, and I heard her feeling for the matches. She struck one and was moving toward the gas light, when the lucifer went out, leaving all darkness again. Blessed relief; but how brief! Again I heard her feeling for the matches and trying to light one after another, as they failed to ignite; then ah, "Oh, dear, there are no more!" escaped from her lips. "Safe! safe!" whispered my soul to me, and I thanked God in silence for my deliverance. Belle stepped back to bed, but did not immediately get it; she stooped and lifted the curtains which hung around the bottom, and passed her arm under and around as far as she could reach. I almost felt her fingers graze my face as I held myself fearfully and silently against the wall too far, for her reach. Apparently satisfied that no danger was near her, she lay down in bed again, and I counted her respirations till she was lost in slumber.

As for myself, sleep was entirely out of the question. I never was so wide awake in my life. How I lay upon that hard carpet and thought the night out—thought of her and her love for me. Yes, I was convinced from that moment that the hand of destiny was in it, and that a benign and all-wise Providence had seen fit in this extraordinary way to open my eyes to the path of happiness and peace.

With the morning light fears came upon me less my unconscious room-mate might yet peer beneath the bed for robbers before she left the room; but my fears were groundless. She rose and dressed expeditiously, for she was to join her cousin at an early breakfast, and she had overslept herself. When at last she took the key, unlocked the door, and departed, I lost no time in slipping out of my shameful place of concealment and escaping from the hotel. On the stairs I met Fred coming out of his room, who exclaimed:

"Why, what's the matter with you, old fellow? You look like the last days of an ill-spent life. And your coat, too, why, it's all over feathers and dust. Where have you been?"

"Why, I slept—slept *out* last night; that's all. Our house is full, so I had to find quarters elsewhere. I'm just going home to dress."

"I should say so, decidedly. I see it all, old fellow! You've been on a lark, and had to put up in the watch-house; come now, own up and tell us all about it."

"No lark at all, Fred; nothing of the kind, I assure you."

"Well, if not *lark*, what kind of a bird was it? From the looks of the feathers I should say it was a *goose*."

"*You're* the goose, Fred. But, seriously, I've a word to say to you of a most important nature. Be a man, Fred, and make up your mind to hear something excessively disagreeable. It must be told you sooner or later, and I may as well tell it now."

"Good heavens, Gus, how earnest you look at me; you don't mean to say that—that anything has happened to Belle Bronson?"

"Don't mention her name again, Fred, or think of her any more, for she never'll be anything to you. I have it from one who knows all about it, that she has long been attached to somebody else, and that somebody else means to marry her. There is no mistake about it; so bear up and try your luck elsewhere."

But Fred Evans was not to be discouraged by mere hearsay. That very day he went to see Belle, determined to know his fate from her own lips. Soon after he left Oakville, and I did not see him again for several years, when, meeting him in town one day, I insisted on bringing him home with me, and presenting him to his old flame, Belle Bronson—the present Mrs. Evergreen.

"Ah, Gus!" said he, after dinner, when my wife and the little Evergreens had left us to ourselves—"Ah, Gus, you served me a shabby trick when you allowed me to lose my heart to the girl you were all along intending to marry yourself—a very shabby trick—one of which I never suspected you!"

So I had to tell him (in strict confidence, of course, as I tell you, reader), all about the bedroom affair at the Oakville Hotel, and the love that grew out of it.

PURPOSE.

We are all afloat on the sea of time, with Purpose for the rudder of our life, Hope for its silken sails, and Death its goal. Yet few are they who grasp the helm. The many are content to float idly, whither the wind will, drifting, through days that smile and days that frown, down all the currents of circumstance, without the forethought to garner against to-morrow the sunshine that falls upon to-day.

Every man has somewhere his Hesperides, sunny islands afar, lying beyond the zone of storms and lapped in perpetual summer. All dream of the day when they will sail into these celestial ports, yet heed not to trim their sails and steer thither. There are so many perilous passes on the route; so many shining harbors; and few there are like Ulysses, resolute to sail uncharmed down the coasts of the Sirens.

To such men life has no aim. Their days forget a past and ignore a future. Their nights are blank abysses between two worlds. The earth is a stage and their lives an endless succession of interludes, while behind the scenes the Fates rehearse the real drama of their existence, only appearing on the stage as the curtain is about to fall. But he who lives for an end is his own fate, the chief actor in his own play of life. The charm of a fixed purpose welds the broken links of time into the grand chain of a noble existence. So that the object be worthy the effort, no matter how lofty or how distant it may be, let a man but make his days stepping-stones to the purpose of his years, and the loftiest peaks become accessible.

On such a soul side winds of happiness blow, cheering but not changing its course. On such a soul storms beat in vain. The wise man builds his future on the experience of his past. On the fool pain and precept are alike wasted; he dallies through life's summer, and when days of sorrow come they fall on his soul like October frosts on the wings of the unhoused butterfly; while the provident bee sits hived in plenty.

SOWING HIS WILD OATS.

BY E. PERKINS.

"Sowing his wild oats"—aye! sowing them deep
In the heart of a mother to blossom in tears,
And shadow with grief the decline of her years.

"Sowing his wild oats," to silver the head
Of the sire who watched his first pulse throb with joy,
And whose voice went to heaven in prayer for "the boy."

"Sowing his wild oats," to spring up and choke
The flowers in the garden of a sister, whose love
Is as pure and as bright as the blue sky above.

"Sowing his wild oats." Aye! cheeks shall grow pale
And sorrow shall wither the heart of the wife
When manhood thus squanders the prime of his life.

"Sowing his wild oats." Death only shall reap
With his keen sharpened scythe; the fruits will be found
In the graveyard near by, 'neath that grass-covered mound.

GERMAINE WILDE.

BY C. ARNOLD.

"It is positively shamefull" ejaculated Lyle Curtis.

"What?" asked Miss Germaine Wilde, looking up from her embroidery.

"As if you did not know, Germaine!"

"I know? How should I?"

"Surely, how should you? What have we been talking about for the last half hour?"

"Of the weather, the latest style of visiting cards, Miss Payson's charity-school, and Kate Kershaw."

"Kate Kershaw. There you have it! She is beautiful and fascinating, and flirts with charming science; and I say it's a shame."

"A shame that she flirts? Cousin Lyle, one would think you had been wounded."

"Not I. I am all right. But I have known Henry Ridgeway from boyhood, and he is the most glorious old fellow in the world—worthy of a queen. And it makes me growl to think he should waste himself on Kate Kershaw."

Miss Wilde arched her handsome eyebrows.

"Do you think her unworthy?"

"I do. She has no soul. And Henry is all soul."

"Ah! fortunate fellow! How much he must save in tailor's bills."

"Pshaw! Germaine, you are in a sarcastic mood! and I do not like you then. What is the matter? Was Lawrence inattentive last night?"

"Lawrence? Really, I do not remember."

"Do not remember! And yet engaged to marry George Lawrence! Only hear the woman! Wouldn't George feel flattered?"

"I daresay. You might ask him if you feel any curiosity on the subject."

"Germaine, seriously, I am afraid you do not love this man you are promised to! Tell me, cousin. I could not bear to see my little Germaine unhappy."

She flushed slightly, and put away the hand Lyle Curtis extended to clasp hers. She was not a woman to accept sympathy tamely.

"Lyle, let us not talk upon this matter. I presume I shall marry Mr. Lawrence. I like him as well as I do any of the others. I have lived twenty-seven years in the world, and I regard love as a myth."

Lyle held up his hands in much horror.

"Twenty-seven, and unmarried! Good gracious, Germaine! I don't wonder you are desperate. Let me see the gray hairs. I'll keep the secret for you."

She laughed.

"My dear Lyle, they will come in time like all other disagreeable things. And now let us talk of Henry Ridgeway. Is there a romance to tell?"

"Hardly. It is a very simple story. They met in the country. Two young people thrown constantly together in a great lonesome house, summer afternoons in the woods, moonlight walks, rides at sunset, and then the inevitable consequence. She softened her pride, and lent a willing ear to words he was only too ready to speak. And he believes her noble and generous and loyal."

"Perhaps she is."

"I tell you she is not. I know her thoroughly. She is a gay, heartless woman of the world. He is heir to a hundred thousand, and her income is barely sufficient to keep her in pearls and point lace. Don't you see?"

"Yes, I see. How hot the sun is! Hand me that fan, Lyle, please."

Lyle Curtis looked at his cousin through his half-closed eyes. She was an enigma to him; she had always been. He saw a dark face flushed in the lips and cheeks to crimson, lighted by great luminous brown eyes, and framed in wavy bands of black hair. The whole face was full of passion; he almost trembled with thinking how that woman might love, and yet, by her own confession, she had never felt a single throb of sweet emotion.

A sudden idea swept over him. It was so new that it showed itself in its face.

"Well, Lyle, what is it?" she asked, smiling at his earnestness.

"Oh, Germaine, if it could only be! But, confound it, there are always obstacles in the way!"

"In the way of what?"

"I was thinking of you and Henry Ridgeway—and together."

"Lyle,"—she rose haughtily—"I forgive you because you are my cousin; and, were it not too much trouble, I would teach this Henry Ridgeway a lesson."

"And you would teach yourself at the same time," returned Lyle, warmly. "I'll wager a coronet."

"We shall see," she said, and left him to himself.

The next morning Henry Ridgeway came to Cedar Bluff—came as the escort of Miss Kershaw.

Old Mark Hartley, the widowed proprietor of the finest place for miles round, sought to supply his lack of kindred by surrounding himself with the children of his friends; and every year in summer time the old halls rang with merry voices and festive songs.

Germaine met Ridgeway on the back piazza. She was tying up a stray branch of a rosebud, and the thorns caught her sleeve.

Ridgeway was smoking just behind her on the steps, and she did not perceive him until he spoke in a quiet, authoritative way.

"You are a captive. Permit me to release you."

He cut off the offending branch with his knife, and detached it from her sleeve. Then their eyes met. She looked up at him, he down at her. Her forehead reached just to his lips. He thought of it even then.

What a revelation a single glance will sometimes make! In that very first moment one soul spoke to the other, and the language was understood. Ridgeway grew pale as death, and Germaine flushed to the roots of her hair.

She turned from him rudely, and swept into the hall. From there she went up into her chamber. She was supremely angry with him and with herself. He had exercised over her a power she had never felt before—this man, who was to her an utter stranger, and whose heart was in the keeping of another woman!

She made a wicked resolve. The idle words she had spoken to Lyle Curtis about the lesson she would teach Ridgeway should not be idle words. She looked in the glass. Her face might help her to any conquest. She shut her small hands slowly; the action spoke volumes.

At dinner Mr. Ridgeway was formally presented. Germaine acknowledged the introduction with her usual haughty grace.

Ridgeway sat beside Kate Kershaw; Kate, golden of hair, with eyes amber brown, and a complexion like cream flushed with meadow strawberry. Her voice was soft and sweet as the ocean wind, and her smile a glory that made her false, fair face like the faces we think the angels wear.

Ridgeway, cool and calm, talked to Miss Kershaw, and occasionally looked at Germaine. I think he understood at once how it was to be between them.

A week of fine weather and pleasure-seeking followed. There was fishing and bathing, and botanical excursions, and delightful mornings in the cool parlors, mellow sunset rambles by the lake-side, before the grass grew too wet with summer dew.

Germaine and Ridgeway were polite to each other, coldly so, and Kate Kershaw, with the keen instinct of a practised flirt, understood them better than they understood themselves. But she could afford to be quiet for there was "better game in the moors," if it could be snared.

One day the party went to Forest Bluff, a great rock rising gradually from the plain, covered mostly with scrubby trees, and hanging far out over the sea.

Germaine strayed away from the others, and went out on the extreme verge of the rock. The dizzy height fascinated her. She thought she would like to stoop over and look down. She did so; but the insecure footing deceived her, and in another second she would have been dashed on the rocks below, if Henry Ridgeway had not caught her back.

One moment he held her tightly to his breast, his heart beating so that it almost stopped his breath, and then she tore herself from him with rude haste. Her eyes blazed, her whole face flashed the scorn and anger she felt.

"I could almost wish I had let you perish," he muttered between his closed teeth.

In his hoarse voice she had a triumph. She had the power to move him, even as he could move her. She felt a sort of fierce delight in the thought, and she the betrothed of a man who trusted her. She scorned herself the next moment, wondering to what base depths she was sinking.

From Lawrence she shrank with a sort of nervous dread. The touch of his hand angered her. She vaguely wished she had been in her grave that winter's night, six months before, when, in the soft flush of chandeliers, the subdued atmosphere of orange flowers and hot-house plants, she had promised to be his wife.

A little later she met Lyle Curtis alone. Somehow she could not bear to look her cousin in the eyes now, so she turned her head away towards the sunset.

Her took her chin and lifted her face into the light.

"Germaine," he said, gravely, "you are playing a dangerous game, and I am not afraid to wager whatever you please that you will lose."

Her cheeks grew hot.

"Lyle, you are impertinent."

"I ask your pardon: but in teaching Harry Ridgeway a lesson, be careful you do not learn it before him."

The girl's anger was something terrible.

Lyle felt himself writhing under it. He tried to apologise.

"My dearest cousin," he said, "my little Germaine——"

But she struck down the arm he would have put around her, and flew up to her chamber.

Once there, she fought the battle all over again, and came forth victor for the time. And during the next fortnight no smile came readier than hers, no laugh was more frequent. But at the end of the fortnight a change was coming. It brought the first of September, and on the fourth day of that month Germaine and Lawrence were to be wedded. It had all been arranged previously, and the party at Cedar Bluff was to be a wedding party at the last.

The night before the wedding Germaine refused to come down to the drawing-room. Something made her wish to be alone. But after a while the silence and the terrible chance for thought made her half frantic. She threw on a shawl and stole out on the lower piazza. Glancing in at the window, she saw Miss Kershaw, cool, calm and smiling, sitting on the sofa beside Henry Ridgeway. Lawrence, gloomy and abstracted, leaned against the mantelshelf.

Germaine seated herself on the trunk of a tree and gathered up a handful of the dead leaves at her feet.

A footstep stirred the dry grass. She rose; but a strong hand forced her back, and she heard close beside her the heavy breathing of Henry Ridgeway, and felt his eyes burning down into her own.

"Germaine," he said, hoarsely, "you are to be married to-morrow?"

She did not speak. Something choked her. He repeated the question.

"You are to be married to-morrow?"

She bowed.

"And you do not love George Lawrence—because your whole soul belongs to another."

She sprang to her feet, her cheeks flushed, her eyes blazing. In that moment of bitter shame she could almost have killed Henry Ridgeway, because of the humiliation he had put upon her.

He wrapped his arms around her, and held her to his breast so closely she could not struggle.

"My darling! my darling! forgive me! I love you so! I am half mad! Where is the use of fighting against it any longer? You are mine, and I am yours; and nothing save death shall divide us."

In that moment what did he care if Kate Kershaw wore the willow, and George Lawrence stood at the altar bridegroomless?

And suddenly a rustle amid the leaves smote the silence; and, looking up, Germaine and Henry stood face to face with Kate and George Lawrence.

Lawrence was the first to recover his self-possession.

He extended his hand to Ridgeway.

"A fair exchange is no robbery, is it?" he asked meaningly.

Germaine and Ridgeway comprehended matters in a flash, and both hearts thanked Heaven devoutly.

Kate spoke in her cool, silvery tone:

"Mr. Lawrence is better suited to my taste, Mr. Ridgeway; and I do not think, from appearances, that Miss Wilde will break her heart."

The next day there was a double wedding at Cedar Bluff, and four people were made happy. Henry and Germaine married for love, Kate for wealth and Lawrence for beauty.

PRAISE YOUR WIFE.

A STORY FOR HUSBANDS.

BY J. F. HILL.

Andrew Lee came home from his shop, where he had worked all day, tired and out of spirits; came home to his wife, who was also tired and out of spirits.

"A smiling wife and a cheerful home—a paradise it would be," said Andrew to himself, as he turned his eyes from the clouded face of Mrs. Lee and sat down with knitted brows and moody aspect.

Not a word was spoken by either; Mrs. Lee was getting supper, and she moved about with a weary step.

"Come," she said at last, with a side glance at her husband.

Andrew arose and went to the table. He was tempted to speak an angry word, but controlled himself and kept silent. He could find no fault with the chop, nor the homemade bread, nor the fragrant tea. They would have cheered his inward man if there had been a gleam of sunshine on the face of his wife. He noticed she did not eat.

"Are you not well, Mary?"

These words were on his lips; but he did not utter them, for the face of his wife looked so repellant that he feared an irritating reply.

And so, in moody silence, the twain sat together until Andrew had finished his supper.

As he pushed his chair back his wife arose and commenced clearing off the table.

"This is purgatory!" said Lee to himself, as he commenced walking the floor of their little breakfast-room, with his hands thrust into his trowsers pockets and his chin almost touching his breast.

After removing and taking things into the kitchen, Mrs. Lee spread a green cover over the table, and placing a fresh-trimmed lamp thereon, went out and shut the door after her, leaving her husband alone with his unpleasant feelings. He took a long, deep breath as she did so, paused in his walk, stood still for some moments, and then drawing a paper from his pocket, sat down by the table, opened the sheet and commenced reading. Singularly enough, the words upon which his eyes rested were "Praise your wife." They rather tended to increase the disturbance of mind from which he was suffering.

"I should like to find some occasion for praising mine." How quickly his thoughts expressed that ill-natured sentiment! But his eyes were on the paper before him and he read on:

"Praise your wife, man; for pity's sake, give her a little encouragement. It won't hurt her."

Andrew Lee raised his eyes from the paper and muttered, "Oh, yes, that's all very well—praise is cheap enough. But praise her for what? For being sullen and making her home the most disagreeable place in the world?" His eyes fell again to the paper.

"She has made your home comfortable, your heart bright and shining, your food agreeable; for pity's sake tell her you thank her, if nothing more. She don't expect it. It will make her eyes wider than they have been for ten years; but it will do her good for all that and you too."

It seemed to Andrew as if this sentence was written expressly for him and just for the occasion. It was a complete answer to his question, "Praise her for what?" and he felt it also as a rebuke. He read no further, for thoughts came too busy, and in a new direction. Memory was convincing him of injustice to his wife. She had always made her home as comfortable for him as she could make it, and had he offered the light return of praise or commendation? Had he ever told her of the satisfaction he had known or the comfort he had experienced? He was not able to recall the time or occasion. As he thought thus Mrs. Lee came in from the kitchen, and taking her work-basket from the closet placed it on the table, and sitting down without speaking began to sew. Mr. Lee glanced almost stealthily at the work in her hands, and saw that it was the bosom of a shirt, which she was stitching neatly. He knew that it was for him she was at work.

"Praise your wife!" These words were before the eyes of his mind, and he could not look away from them. But he was not ready for this yet. He still felt moody and unforgiving. The expression of his wife's face he interpreted to mean ill-nature, for which he had no patience. His eyes fell upon the newspaper that was lying spread out before him, and he read the sentence, "A kind, cheerful word spoken in a gloomy house, is the little rift in the cloud that lets the sunshine through."

Lee struggled with himself a while longer.

His own ill-nature had to be conquered first; his moody, accusing spirit had to be subdued.

He thought of many things to say, and yet he feared to say them lest his wife should meet his address with a rebuff. At last, leaning toward her, and taking hold upon the shirt-bosom at which she was at work, he said in a voice that was carefully modulated with kindness:

"You are doing the work beautifully, Mary."

Mrs. Lee made no reply. But her husband did not fail to notice that she lost, almost instantly, that rigid erectness with which she had been sitting, nor that the motion of her needle had ceased.

"My shirts are better made and whiter than those of any other man in the shop," said Lee, encouraged to go on.

"Are they?"

Mrs. Lee's voice was low, and had in it a slight huskiness. She did not turn her face, but her husband saw that she leaned a little towards him. He had broken the ice of reserve, and all was now easy. His hand was among the clouds, and a feeble ray was already struggling through the rift it had made.

"Yes, Mary," he answered, softly, "and I've heard it more than once what a good wife Andrew Lee must have."

Mrs. Lee turned her face toward her husband. There was something light in it and light in her eye. But there was something in the expression of the countenance that a little puzzled him.

"Do you think so?" she asked quite soberly.

"What a queer question!" ejaculated Andrew Lee, starting up and going round to the side of the table where his wife was sitting. "What a question, Mary!" he repeated, as he stood before her.

"Do you?" was all she said.

"Yes, darling!" was his warm-spoken answer, and he stooped down and kissed her. "How strange that you should ask me such a question."

"If you would only tell me so, now and then, Andrew, it would do me good." Mrs. Lee arose, and leaning her face against the manly breast of her husband stood and wept.

What a strong light broke in on the mind of Andrew Lee! He had never given his wife even the small reward of praise for the loving interest she had manifested daily, until doubt of his love had entered her soul, and made the light around her thick darkness. No wonder that her face grew clouded, or that what he considered moodiness and ill-nature took possession of her spirit.

"You are good and true, Mary, my own dear wife. I am proud of you, and my first desire is for your happiness. Oh, if I could always see your face in sunshine, my home would be the dearest place on earth."

"How precious to me are your words of love and praise, Andrew," said Mrs. Lee, smiling up through her tears into his face. "With them in my ears, my heart can never lie in shadow."

How easy had been the work for Andrew Lee! He had swept his hand across the cloudy horizon, and now the bright sunshine was streaming down and flooding that home with joy and beauty.

GRACE DARNLEY'S GOLDEN HAIR.

BY JAMES A. WARNER.

I was just twenty-two when I first met Grace Darnley. She was fair, tall and graceful. But her chief beauty was in her exquisite hair, which was of the purest, pale, golden hue, and so luxuriant that the fair young head appeared to bend beneath its weight. In whatever way it was arranged, whether in heavy braids almost as thick as my arm, or in silken, massive coils, or in curls that fell below the slender waist, or left to flow unbound, rippling down like a golden glory, it was always the most wonderful hair I had ever seen. I raved of Grace's hair by day, I dreamed of it by night. "The fair one with the golden locks," I whispered in her blushing ear.

I and my sister Alice were orphans, and had lived together until about a year before my story opens, when Alice was married. Alice was different in character from myself; she was less imaginative and more practical. She did not share my enthusiasm for Grace.

"Take care! Take care!" she said. "All is not gold that glitters."

It was a happy moment, when, after many a jealous pang caused by rival admirers, I heard her low "Yes," in response to my ardent protestations of love, and my offer of my hand. Alice, when I told her the next day, made me, for the first time in my life, angry with her, for she called me a blind fool, and said I had thrown myself and my fortune away on one who was both false and artificial. But my anger was soothed by the warmth with which the Darnleys, one and all, received me. Old Mr. Darnley, after he had ascertained that the popular report had not exaggerated the extent of my income, shook me enthusiastically by the hand, and declared that I was a "son-in-law after his own heart." His wife took me to her maternal bosom, bestowing on me a salutation with which I could have willingly dispensed. I was kissed, blessed and shaken hands with by all the aunts, uncles and cousins; and people in general felicitated me upon being the happiest of men.

Alice, much as she disliked Miss Darnley, said she would call upon her. At this, I forgave my sister all.

"When you know Grace better, you will get over your prejudices," I remarked, as we drove to Mr. Darnley.

We were kept some time waiting in the parlor before Grace made her appearance. In the meantime, Nellie her youngest sister, a child of six, came in, to make my sister's acquaintance. Alice was exceedingly fond of children. So the little one was soon established upon her knee, amusing her with her childish prattle.

"What a pretty curl you have!" she cried admiringly. "Can you take it off?"

"No, dear," answered Alice, laughing. "Not unless I cut it off; it grows upon my head."

"Grows!" the child repeated. "How strange! Why, some people take theirs off at night, and put it away in a drawer."

Alice gave me a malicious glance; but just then Grace, a deep frown upon her fair brow, entered. I could not understand why she spoke so sharply to little Nellie and immediately sent her from the room. Alice did not enlighten me, merely remarking, when we had left the house, that Grace's angelic attributes appeared to exist only in my imagination.

"Certainly her conduct to that innocent child was anything but angelic," she added, when she saw how little impression she had made on me.

The days of our engagement passed swiftly on. Alice's constant sneers only heightened my passion. Every hour I became more in love. Grace's maiden dignity increased the effect of her charms. Often I attempted to twine her silken curls around my finger, to toy with those golden, rippling waves, but I was always repulsed with a coy sweetness that left me more deeply infatuated than ever.

I was excessively fond of riding on horseback, so my first present to Grace was a beautiful horse, and almost every day we took long rides together. She was a graceful equestrian, and never looked better than in the saddle. She rode fearlessly, too; and this also made me prouder of her.

One day, as we rode together, I noticed that her hair was arranged with even more effect than usual. I complimented her on it, saying that I detested anything stiff or artificial in the arrangement of a lady's hair.

"Yes," she answered, sweetly; "I have such a quantity of hair, I scarcely know how to hold it up. Sometimes I think I shall be obliged to cut half of it off. Many girls, as you, perhaps, know, do not scruple even to wear false hair; but this appears to me to be contrary to the purity and dignity of womanhood. A true woman would not seek admiration and notice by adorning herself with borrowed ornaments. Mamma has always taught us to be natural, above all things."

I was delighted with these admirable sentiments. They coincided exactly with my own. I looked at her again. Never had she been so beautiful. The close habit of blue cloth displayed the rounded form to its fullest perfection. Exercise had brought a vivid flush to the fair cheek, a bright light to the soft blue eye. The jaunty black hat, with its waving plume, just shaded the sweet face; and the sun, shining full upon her hair, caused it to look like living gold. I became enthusiastic. I could hardly find words vivid enough to express my admiration.

Suddenly Miss Darnley grew deadly pale, trembled, and raised her hand to her head.

"I think—I think," she gasped, "that my hair is falling!"

I was rather glad of the chance of seeing her glorious hair, in all its splendor, flowing down her back, and was about to say so, when her now evidently excessive annoyance checked my tongue.

"Do not be alarmed. I will hold Selim while you arrange it," I suggested, at last. "No one will pass; take your own time."

Pale and breathless, and more agitated than ever, she endeavored to restrain the flowing profusion of her tresses. But in vain. Her hair, half unbound, fell upon her shoulders like a golden cloud. But it did not stop there. Was I mad, or dreaming? The glittering braids and waving curls suddenly shot downward, and the next moment lay upon the ground almost beneath black Selim's hoofs.

I looked at Grace in amazement. Confusion was written on every feature of her face. In place of the profusion of braids, which had crowned her graceful head, was one little yellow wisp, to which the description given by the French lady of her friend's hair, "two hairs, two inches long," might be applied. I was irresistibly reminded of a plucked fowl, and could hardly keep from laughing.

I understood it all now. My fair one's golden locks were only her own, insomuch as she had paid for them. Beautiful? Bah!

Without a word, I raised the locks, the very touch of which caused me to shudder. Without a word, she pinned them to her head.

Then we turned our horses' heads homeward. Without a word, we parted; and from that day to this I have never seen Grace Darnley or her golden hair.

LOVE AS A POWER.

With all our grand talk concerning the duties of life and its noble aspirations, we must admit that love is the lever which moves the world. At first it surprises one that love should be made the principal staple of all the best kinds of fiction; and perhaps it is to be regretted that it is only one kind of love that is chiefly depicted in works of fiction. But that love itself is the most remarkable thing in human life there can be no doubt. For see what it will conquer! It is not only that it prevails over selfishness, but it has the victory over weariness, tiresomeness and familiarity. When you are with a person loved, you have no sense of being bored. This humble and trivial circumstance is the great test, the only sure and abiding test, of love. With the person you do not love you are never supremely at your ease. You have some of the sensation of walking upon stilts. In conversation with them, however much you admire them and are interested in them, the horrid idea will cross your mind of "What shall I say next?" Converse with them is not perfect association. But with those you love the satisfaction in their presence is not unlike that of the relation of heavenly bodies one to another, which in their silent revolutions lose none of their attractive power. Love is sufficient unto itself, finding pleasure in mere existence.

GIVE WORK, NOT ALMS.—Charity is one of the sweetest virtues man or woman can possess, yet it is often misused. We believe that a hungry man should be given something to eat, whether he is an honest man or a thief; but it is absurd giving money to beggars under any circumstances. Their stories are almost invariably false, and if they tell of a wife and fifteen or twenty children and other luxuries of poverty, you can almost always correctly put it down that they are telling you a wilful lie, as these pitiful stories are only resorted to in order to obtain the wherewithal with which to procure strong drink at the nearest public house. Whenever an able-bodied man asks for a meal, give him a saw and let him saw an armful or two of wood for his meal. Then, too, if a house gets a reputation on the road for requiring work, those who would rather starve than toil will keep away, and small articles left about yards are much safer in consequence.

INCONSISTENCY.—How strange a thing it is that some men will engage in a business for which their nature wholly unfits them! An unaccommodating man, for instance, who is too indolent, too proud, or too indifferent to make himself agreeable to customers, should never turn shopkeeper. Yet how many do it! That kind of man, too, should never become the landlord of a tavern or hotel. Yet how many do it! They inevitably meet with no success in business, because more urbane, obliging and pleasing dealers absorb their custom; but still the error is repeated, and people rush into business, now, because it "pays," just as they used to do, and without pausing to consider whether their manners, habits, address, etc., are adapted to invite prosperity, or render it next to impossible.

IT may be justly said that the pride that apes humility is the most objectionable, as in addition to the bad qualities inherent in a false unfounded estimate of self, it superadds that of hypocrisy—and no combination can be more odious than that of hypocrisy with pride.

No power in the human soul should ever be weakened—one cannot repeat this too often—only its counterbalancing power strengthened; in squirrels the upper row of teeth often grows painfully long, but only when the lower one is lost.

RECEIPTS
GENERAL AND DOMESTIC

A CUP of coffee is a sure barometer, if you allow the sugar to drop to the bottom of the cup and watch the bubbles arise without disturbing the coffee. If the bubbles collect in the middle, the weather will be fine; if they adhere to the cup, forming a ring, it will be rainy; and if the bubbles separate without assuming any fixed position, changeable weather may be expected. Try it.

A CURE FOR TOOTHACHE.—At a meeting of the London Medical Society, Dr. Blake, a distinguished practitioner, said that he was able to cure the most desperate case of toothache, unless the disease was connected with rheumatism, by the application of the following remedy: Alum, reduced to an impalpable powder, two drachms; nitrous spirit of ether, seven drachms; mix and apply to the tooth.

TO CLEAR a room of mosquitoes, take of gum camphor a piece about one-third the size of an egg, and evaporate it by placing it in a tin vessel and holding it over a lamp or candle, taking care that it does not ignite. The smoke will soon fill the room and expel the mosquitoes. One night, not long since, I was terribly annoyed by them, when I thought of and tried the above, after which I neither saw nor heard them that night, and next morning there was not one to be found in the room.

WE have read about two hundred and fifty methods, or rather references to the way "scratches" in horses should be treated. But there is no danger of the scratches if the horses are treated properly. Dirty stalls, and long standing in mud, and especially in clay stalls, and a neglect to wash daily the feet of the animal, are what produces this disease, sometimes leading to "quarter crack" and greatly diminishing his usefulness and value. But when, from any cause, the scratches do come, among the many curatives is a thick paste of gunpowder, well pulverized, two parts, and common salt, one part, diluted in strong vinegar, and rub two or three times daily, first thoroughly washing with castile soap and water.

A VALUABLE SECRET.—A laundress gave us the following recipe for doing up shirt bosoms. Any lady who is desirous of making home happy, will do well to try the experiment. It will be found a sovereign antidote to that perilous stuff which weighs upon the heart—an ill-ironed and ill-fitting shirt bosom: Take two ounces of white gumarabic powder; put into a pitcher, and pour on a pint or more of water, and then having covered it, let it stand all night. In the morning pour it from the dregs into a clean bottle, and cork and keep it for use. A tablespoonful of gum water stirred in a pint of starch, made in the usual manner, will give to lawns, either white or printed, a look of newness, which nothing else can restore to them after they have been washed.

TO CLEAN PAINT.—There is a very simple method to clean most any kind of paint that has become dirty, and if our housewives should adopt it, it would save them a great deal of trouble. Provide a plate with some of the best whiting to be had, and have ready some warm water and a piece of flannel, which dip into the water and squeeze nearly dry; then take as much whiting as will adhere to it; apply it to the painted surface, when a little rubbing will instantly remove any dirt and grease. After which, wash the part well with clean water, rubbing it dry with soft chamois. Paint thus cleaned looks as well as when first laid on, without any injury to the most delicate colors. It is far better than using soap, and it does not require more than half the time and labor.

COMMON SENSE.

It has been said in another form of expression that the slightest excess of expenses over income is poverty, and the slightest excess of income over expenses is wealth. The ability of practical farmers to master this great problem of life is not so much dependent upon what they know of their business as on their faculty to apply what they know. Success in business is due to administration. Capacity in administration is due to that faculty, power, or quality called common sense, which everybody speaks well of and nobody understands exactly. We infer its presence or its absence from the results of a man's life. We venture upon a definition of the phrase we are using, not so much for the purpose of making its meaning clear as for the greater purpose of giving it a loftier place in your thoughts. Common sense is a degree, a high degree—in fine, the highest degree of human wisdom applied to practical things. It is not learning; it is not knowledge; it is rather the faculty of applying what we may know to what we do. Other things being equal, the practical farmer who knows the most will do the best; but other things not being equal, a man who excels in wisdom in administration may surpass a man of greater learning, or even greater knowledge of things. But do not allow this suggestion to lead you to place a low estimate upon learning, whether general or professional; culture of every sort gives us capacity to appreciate wisdom, and opportunity also for its exercise.

HOW TO TALK.—If you have the ability to amuse, talk often in company, and in a way which shows that you understand what is said around you. But do not talk long. In that case you are apt to tire your hearers. There are many persons, who, though they have nothing to talk of never know when to leave off talking. There are some who labor under so great and insatiable a desire for talking, that they will even interrupt others when about to speak. We should in society never talk of our own or other's domestic affairs. Yours are of no interest to them, and theirs should not be to you. Besides, the subject is of so delicate a nature, that with the best intentions it is a chance if we do not make some mortifying mistakes, or wound the feelings of some of the company.

A NEWSPAPER is the only instrument which can drop the same thought into a thousand minds at the same moment.

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NEXT WEEK!

Another Thrilling Romance!

We take great pleasure in announcing to our readers that in the next number we shall present the opening chapters of

WRUNG FROM THE GRAVE;

OR,

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In adding the name of the author of

"WRUNG FROM THE GRAVE"

to our list of talented contributors, we give additional evidence to our readers of our continued efforts to make THE POST a *really* first-class journal.

NO PLACE LIKE HOME.

A trite maxim hath it that "Home is where the heart is;" and if we might sometimes be disposed to quarrel a little with the assertion, we should hardly be inclined to do more than transpose it slightly, and say "the true heart is where the home is;" for it is undoubtedly true that the first instinct of man, after the merely animal instinct of self-preservation, is to provide for himself a home. And let that home be what it will—squalid, dingy, meagre, comfortable, or palatial—let it be desolate and lonely, or illuminated with the presence of fond companions and musical with the laughter of children, it will be, through all, the central point of existence, around which will cling and grow lovingly all the truest, purest and noblest sensibilities and aspirations. Our first thoughts in moments of triumph, success, or happiness, and alike in moments of pain, sorrow, danger and despair, is of home; for there, more than anywhere else, we are sure of that tender or exuberant sympathy which our varying moods demand. The spot hallowed by our tears, our prayers, our hopes, our sacrifices, and above all by our love, becomes the Mecca of all our pilgrimages; and let us be erratic, truant, discontented as we will, we shall eventually double upon our own wayward footsteps and return to it once more, if only to die surrounded by its holy affections and influences.

How the poets have sung in eloquent numbers of home, and how they still sing tirelessly upon the same darling theme! Search the language through, and there is no fitting or beautiful word which has not been used for its exaltation. Who has not seen a gay and merry company, seemingly careless, thoughtless—heartless, almost—hushed into the most tender and touching reverence, when some sweet young voice among them rang with bell-like vibrations through their hearts, those sweet lines so replete with holiest meaning:

"'Mid pleasures and palaces
Though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble,
There's no place like home."

And with what pathetic pathos and fervor every soul found utterance in the simple chorus, grand in its very simplicity:

"Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
Be it ever so humble,
There's no place like home."

THE SATURDAY EVENING POST was established on the 4th of August, 1821, and has therefore completed its Fifty-third Volume. It has faithfully maintained its well-earned reputation as a chaste and popular literary journal throughout all these fifty-three years, and stands to-day at the head of its co-temporaries both in Europe and America. Printed in quarto form, it contains forty-eight columns, forty-six of which are regularly devoted to interesting reading matter, for which the proprietor pays high prices, preferring to do this rather than to fill up his columns with advertisements at any price. — From *Clipper*, Brownsville, Penna.

THEODORA.

BY MAGGIE L. S. BURKE.

A flower within a mossy dell,
A star aboon midsummer's night,
A limpid drop in life's pure well,
A gem from God's own crown of light.

Protect the flower from noisome weeds,
Wise prune each stem and train each shoot,
Till fruit has ripened winged seeds,
That speeding up will "There" take root.

Thus will the star illume death's night
With heavenly radiance from afar,
Till in thy crown its steady light
Will guide thy way above each star.

Keep pure the crystal drop, till borne
By sunbeams of God's light above;
In dews of faith 'twill soon return,
And give thee joy for all thy love.

Thus when the king his jewel claims,
Its polish will be found complete,
While He the lapidary names,
A prince and prophet at his feet.

"A gift from God." A sacred trust,
Thy life to bless, lent for a time;
An infant soul sprung from the dust,
Plume thou her wings for Heaven's bright clime.

BABES IN THE WOODS.

BY G. DE B.

Miss Dorathea sat by the fireside, darning gray socks.

Opposite her, beside the little round table on which burned the student lamp, Mr. John was deep in the columns of the evening paper. Judging from the furrows on his puckered brow as he studied its pages, he and the editor did not chime in their views of the political aspect, for now and then an emphatic "fudge!" would quite startle his sister from her meditations.

Miss Dorathea volunteered no reply, however, to these expressions, but went quietly on drawing her long woolen threads in and out—over and under, and thinking to herself the while how like the days of her life it was now—the same old round—up and down—down and up—no variation any more—and in dull gray, too! Now, if there were little scarlet socks to come next, or long striped blue and red stockings—like those the young girls wear to-day—but, pshaw, what business had an old maid—with no one in the world related to her but a bachelor brother—what business had she to be dreaming of baby sons or grown-up daughters!

Just then the door-bell rang, and presently Phebe, the maid, appeared, saying there was "a young gentleman and lady down in the parlor to see Miss Dorathea."

"*Young* gentleman, did you say?" asked Mr. John, looking up severely.

"Yes, sir—and a young lady, too, sir—to see Miss Dorathea."

"Humph! You may keep them down in the parlor, if you please, Dorathea," and Mr. John went back to his paper, thinking very contemptuously to himself, "Some of Dorathea's romantic proteges, of course! What that woman wants to be constantly bothered by chits and snips of boys and girls for, I can't see!"

Miss Dorathea was a romantic old maid, at least that was what her brother, and some few other people, called her. But she was only a girl—of thirty-five, or thereabouts! Her heart was neither wrinkled and creased with care nor gray with age, although her face and hair were beginning to show those traces of Father Time. She felt a keen, warm interest still, in all the little machinations of that tiny blind boy, who shoots off arrows so unerringly—in spite of his defective vision!—and Miss Dorathea was the trusty confidante of half a dozen girls and their lovers. Both came to her with their sorrows and their joys, sure of a full, sweet sympathy in either case. And although Miss Dorathea did make little mistakes sometimes, it was better to believe everybody good and true and constant, than to doubt one unfairly! "Better deceived than deceiving," was one of Miss Dorathea's mottoes. Some called her an "Inveterate Matchmaker"—and not a few mismatches were laid at her door, although the many happy and loving couples who called Miss Dorathea their "Guardian Angel" quite overbalanced the mismates who found their own mistake laid to her charge!

Descending to the parlor, Miss Dorathea found awaiting her there a "chit and a snip," to quote Mr. John, in the persons of the son and daughter of two old friends of hers, living many miles away.

"Why, Fred Harris and Dollie Rivers, as I live!" cried Miss Dorathea, looking surprised enough as she entered upon the two, sitting side by side, with clasped hands, on the sofa. "What are you doing here, at this time of night? Where's your mothers?" and Miss Dorathea looked from one to another, and then behind the door, expecting to see their parents.

The boy rose up then, and looking down upon her—he was a tall boy and Miss Dorathea was a little woman—said:

"We've run off; we've come down to you to get married."

"Married!" echoed Miss Dorathea. "Why, Fred Harris, what do you mean? How old are you?"

"I'm nineteen to-day, and Dollie will be seventeen to-morrow—won't you, Doll? and we want to be married right away—to-night—and we were sure you—Miss Dorathea—would go to a minister's with us!"

Miss Dorathea looked at the two children standing before her, and laughed outright.

"I'd better whip you both soundly and put you to bed instead," said she; "but tell me now, what does this mean? What are you running away for, and who from? I know your parents always intended you for one another—if you were of the same mind when you grew up—and now just explain to me what brought you down here, a hundred miles from home, at this time of night—two runaways!"

The two looked at one another a trifle disconcerted. They hardly expected this—of Miss Dorathea!

Then Fred spoke up bravely.

"The reason's this: we didn't want to be engaged and wait three or four years, and Doll's mother would want her to have trunk loads of dressmaking done first anyway, and we love one another you know, and we just want to be married now—without any fuss."

"Well, I guess there will be 'fuss' enough."

"Ah, dear Miss Dorathea," interrupted Dollie now, "won't you go to the minister's with us? We felt sure you would be our friend. We came right straight to you from the cars; please come with us to the minister's," and Dollie pleaded with the tears half ready to fall from her misty blue eyes.

Miss Dorathea didn't know what to do. Here was a situation! Two babes in the woods, thrown upon the tenderness and mercy of her romantic temperament! She was overpowered by her feelings for a moment. The first thought that followed was: What would John say? It was a thought that brought her to, instantly.

"Children," said she, gravely, "you don't know what you are talking about! Such a step as the one you contemplate, requires more serious thought than either of you have given it. It is for life, Dollie dear," and Miss Dorathea put her arm around the little slender girl who sat beside her.

"Why Miss Dorathea," cried Fred, "we've thought of being married to one another ever since we've been born! Hain't we, Doll? And now we're going to be to-night, come what may; if you won't go with us we'll go alone," and Master Fred looked very determined and desperate.

"Dollie! what would your mamma say, if she knew you were running away from her, like this?" asked Miss Dorathea, pathetically, now replying to Fred's outburst.

"Why mamma ran away from her mother, when she got married; and so she'll just know all about it," and the pretty lips pouted.

Ah! what makes Miss Dorathea flush up so? Does she recollect that moonlight night—not so many years ago either—when she helped that same mamma to run away from her's?

Miss Dorathea was silent. What should she do? She could not telegraph to their parents. It was too late, and too far for them to come immediately. The two were determined to be married. She would not lock them up to prevent them. It was better then, she concluded, that they should be married from the house of their mother's friend, than to go off alone now, to a strange minister, and it was a strange place to them, and it was almost ten o'clock! Oh, dear! this was almost too romantic for even Miss Dorathea!

"Well, children," said she, at last, "I will go up-stairs and speak to brother, and if he is willing, I will then send right around for Dr. S., and will have the wedding here; but, Dollie dear, where is your baggage," asked Miss Dorathea, stopping at the door.

Dollie blushed, and stammered. "Why, Miss Dorathea—you see—you know—we didn't think of getting married to-day, until just before we started. I just went down town, after school, to buy some Christmas presents for baby and the children, and I met Fred. He was coming out of the library—that's his book on the sofa—and he said, 'Dollie, let's run off and get married?' and I said, 'Well, let's,' and so we went right to the cars, and come straight to you; and I've only got—these—with me," and Dollie opened her little Russia leather satchel, and there was—a pair of blue kid baby boots, a pink silk sash, a book of fairy tales and a box of candy!

Babes in the woods, indeed! Miss Dorathea felt quite like "Boots at the Holly Tree Inn," and laughed and kissed the bride-elect almost with tears!

At the sitting-room door, Miss Dorathea's heart failed her. How should she put it to John? He was so matter-of-fact. He would scold, of course; perhaps swear a little; and maybe would have nothing to do whatever with the matter, and very likely forbid her, as well! "Oh, dear!" Swallowing her fears, and putting on a brave spirit, however, Miss Dorathea entered, and in as few words as she could put it, stated the case.

Mr. John pushed his glasses up on his forehead, looked steadily at Dorathea, to see if she was talking in her sleep, or had lost her senses, then said:

"Do you mean to say you want to bring Dr. S. here to-night, and have those babies married?"

"What else can we do, John?" cried Miss Dorathea, "we can't turn them out of our house to-night, in this strange city, alone. They are determined to be married. Is it not best that they should be now? They have been probably missed by this time. Their names will be in people's mouths. Dollie is my little namesake; I cannot let her go away to-night—" and Miss Dorathea's voice faltered.

"And she's well named," replied Mr. John, with emphasis.

"And you won't let me send for Dr. S., John?"

"No, Dorathea. Nor shall you have anything to do with the marriage of these runaways. I will be blamed by neither of their fathers nor mothers. Let romantic parents take better care of their romantic progeny. I will have nothing to do with the affair. Humph! This is no more than one could expect from Dorathea River's mother's child!" and Mr. John turned his back on his sister who had stood awaiting his reply.

"And you will send this young girl out of your home this night, John!" and Miss Dorathea followed his face again.

"She came out of her mother's house with her lover—let him take care of her now—and Dorathea, remember, I warn you against having anything to do with the matter. You have not forgotten the Fielding affair, I hope," and with these words Mr. John went back to his paper and its political problem, leaving Miss Dorathea standing rebuked, for the "Fielding affair" was one of the mismatches laid at her door.

"Very well, John," said Miss Dorathea, after a short silence, and with her hand on the knob of the door. "I'm a woman, and this course seems altogether a wrong one to me, but I will trust to your superior judgment this time—and we will see how near right a man's heart can dictate in a case like this."

"Hump, heart! It's a clear case of common sense," returned Mr. John, as Miss Dorathea whisked out of the room.

But Miss Dorathea did not obey her brother, nor did she trust to his "superior judgment," or "common sense." She followed her own heart and good "sense" in the matter, and, therefore, before she descended to the parlor again she went to her own room, where she wrote a little note to her pastor, telling him the couple to whom she thus introduced him were desirous of being married that evening, and she felt quite safe in assuring him he would be visited by no displeasure from their parents, in making them man and wife.

"If John will be the cruel uncle, I will be the Robin who cared for the "Babes in the Woods," thought she, as she signed the hastily written note.

"I can not go with you, dears," she explained, when she came down stairs, "but I have written a note to Dr. S., which will make you kindly received by him; and now remember, children, although my advice to you is, remain here with me to-night, and to-morrow go back home and be married as your mothers would like to have you; still, the best I can do for you I have done. Young heads are wilful, and young hearts beat high with love and hope. I know you will not take my advice, but my kind wishes and prayers and blessing I am sure you will accept."

Then Miss Dorathea tied the silk neckkerchief up warm around her little namesake's throat, and buttoned up Fred's overcoat tightly, and kissed them both and watched them from her door, until they passed out of sight. Babes in the woods! The groom, with "Innocents abroad" under his arm; the bride, with her trousseau, of baby boots, pink silk sash, fairy tales and candy. And as they started on their journey in the night, in a strange city, on a new road, a new life, Miss Dorathea prayed fervently for their happiness. Happiness which to them seemed now so unalloyed, and shone undimmed in the far future.

Next day a telegram from a neighboring city came to her. "Dr. S. was at home," it ran, "everything went off all right; we're as happy as birds, and we thank you," and was signed Mr. and Mrs. Harris.

Miss Dorathea sat down then and wrote to her friends, their parents, and told them all. She had done, she said, as she would have liked any one to do were Dollie her daughter, and if Fred had been her son, she would not wish him a better little wife.

"All's well that ends well," and as neither of the parents had a thought of objecting to the marriage of their children, when they arrived at a suitable age, of course, they speedily forgave them for taking things into their own hands and running away like naughty children, as they were.

Miss Dorathea sits by her fireside now and knits socks, little scarlet ones, not for the blue kid boots belonging to the wedding trousseau, but for some just like them which her little *grand* namesake, Dorathea Harris, Jr., aged six months, wears. And Miss Dorathea smiles to herself, over her wools, as she thinks, "after all, the close of her days are not so dull and monotonous, and gray!"

Mr. John looks at her over his paper and growls to himself that he wonders "when Dorathea will ever outgrow her fiddle-faddle romantic nonsense."

Pretty, youthful Mrs. Harris, tells all her school girl friends, who come in squads to look at "Doll River's baby," that her's will be a "ever so much" longer and happier married life than their's, for she will have been wife and mother ages before they will probably think of such a thing as *running out of school* to get married. They all laugh and chatter over the possibility of their, perhaps, doing the same thing, when they get a chance; and then Miss Dorathea, coming in upon them sometimes during their conclaves, they rush to ask her if she will help them as she did Doll.

But Miss Dorathea smiles and answers, "There never was, and I hope there never will be two more *quite* such Babes in the Woods."

MERCENARY MARRIAGES.

BY AUNT JEMIMA.

Talk of foolish fancies as you like—ridicule romance, sneer at "love matches"—you can never bring these things to the level of mercenary marriages. "Love is neither bread nor honey," perhaps; but neither are bread and honey love. Now, I have something to say that makes my heart ache, because I am a woman. It is woman who marries oftenest for other things than love. Woman who goes into the market, adorned in all her beauty, saying to those who read her smiles aright, "Here I am to be married; somebody offer." Woman, whose love should be her life!

It is true that a woman may not choose, but must be chosen; but can it be that a girl can really think coolly of marriage in the abstract, forgetting all individual preference?

I never knew a youth who did not say, at least, "My wife must be a blonde or a brunette; she must be tall or short, gay or quiet;" who had not some ideal.

But I have known girls innumerable who have only said, "I will marry," with no more thought of love or admiration, of respect or tenderness, before marriage could be, than though such feelings were not. To marry—to have a handsome house, a carriage, jewelry; to marry (for ambition has its grades)—to have a kitchen, to make pies in it; to marry—to escape work; to marry—so that no one may utter the epithet "old maid"—when there is such a thing as love in the world, one who knows it would rather die!

Do they hope for happiness, these women? Do they dream that they can play a part through life, and feign love amidst all the daily scenes that bring truth to the surface? It is shocking, a terrible thing to talk of, when a man marries an heiress for her gold; but every day women do the same thing, and are applauded as having "made good matches."

Oh, the cold, cheerless firesides!—the couples who care not if seas roll between them!—the men to whom home offers no attraction! Amidst all woman's wrongs, men have theirs; and this is one—that some men must have a horrible consciousness that, at the altar, their wife's one thought must have been that she had secured some one to pay her bills for her.

THE PEARL.

The most precious pearl is found in the diseased or wounded pearl-oyster. Naturalists are not positively sure such is the origin; yet the opinion generally accepted is, that some foreign substance, as a pebble, enters the shell and produces a transformation, or, that in consequence of disease a similar effect is induced, either of which is permanent. The result is a growth of precious substance that adorns the neck of princesses, is coveted by the beauty to aid her charms, and sought after by the miser for gain.

A beautiful moral is seen in this. The physical fact is applicable to the human heart. Our sweetest poems are the result of wounds or disappointments that petrify in the meshes of the affections. Herein the most pathetic songs have their origin. The chime of brooklets through the forest's heart makes no such wild melody as tears flowing over the rocks of grief when the springs of the soul are unsealed. Tennyson's friend died and the world reads "In Memoriam;" had he lived, the emotions delineated in it would have slept forever in the poet's bosom, like latent electricity existing in a substance, but not being called into action by friction, the lurking power is imperceptible.

Many a young heart while the morning sun sheds its golden splendors on the opening scene, has felt the fall of some sudden affliction. It could never be that for which fancy longed. The fresh soul, doomed to gaze on its withered buds of hope, knows all its past repair. Yet that same life may, by its changed current, be rendered as much more valuable to the world, as the bivalve containing a pearl instead of an oyster.

Often there is that in a spirit which needs to be broken, as a pearl-oyster before its treasure is yielded. Adverse fortune will do this and show to the beholder a soul of purest loveliness. The shell must be crushed ere it resigns the precious gem.

THE MOTHER'S TEARS.

BY CLOTHO.

"Oh! let no sigh, nor mourner's tear,
Disturb the mystic spell,
For angel guards are hov'ring where
The broken casket fell."

Hushed was the little room. Through the open casement a flood of light streamed from the setting sun, the last rays falling upon the head of a beautiful dying child, whose golden curls, mingling with the gorgeous radiance, formed a crown of glory around the cherubic head.

Every heart was still and subdued, save the stricken mother's, whose sobs of agony and oft-repeated cry, "Father, spare my boy!" burst forth uncontrolled. In that silent, solemn vesper hour, the faint, farewell sigh of the departing spirit was breathed.

Just then the evening star shone out in all its brilliancy. The moon's soft, mellow beams threw a halo of purity over the scene, whilst the mocking-bird's clear and silvery notes rang out a requiem over the "Blessed Dead." All nature seemed to typify the glorious night of the happy soul that had burst the bonds of his frail tenement of clay. It was a message of love and comfort to the sorrowing mother, but she received it not. Her bud of promise had withered under the icy hand of Death.

Transcendantly lovely was the little form in his last, sweet sleep. Sunny curls, clustering around his marble brow, and features cast in perfect mould. Through the transparent lid was seen the soft, azure tinge of the heaven-lit eye, now closed forever on earth. A smile of peace was on the lips—impress of the angels' kiss as they bore away the happy soul.

How sad was it to that bereaved mother to consign to the cold grave this beautiful casket of her cherished idol!

As the last clods fell, echoing with hollow sound, "Dust to dust, ashes to ashes," she sank unconscious to the earth, as though she would mingle her dust with that of her darling boy.

Days, weeks passed on; the mother still wept, and prayed for strength to say, "Thy will be done." After many painful and weary vigils, one night deep sleep fell upon the exhausted frame. A beatific vision burst upon her dreams.

She saw the air filled with beauteous cherubs, holding lamps that were lit. Amidst the glorious band she recognized her own dear boy. Every lamp burned brightly but the one held by her darling, which ever and anon cast a sickly, flickering glare. "Why is it, my darling," she said, "your little lamp is so dim?" "Ah! mother," he replied, "your tears for me fall so plenteously they put out my light!"

The mother awoke. Deep was the impression of that dream. Her tears nevermore flowed for her departed darling. With renewed vigor she took upon her the burden of life. With the eye of faith she looked forward to the reunion of her child and herself in his home of bliss. With meek and cheerful submission she performed life's varied duties. Each night, as she laid her head upon her pillow, a vision of a cherub boy, with lamp in hand, *now* burning brilliantly, passed before her as her weary eyelids closed in peaceful sleep.

THE JOYS OF CHILDHOOD.

BY "LITTLE ONE."

I have been thinking of the time in the "long ago," when beneath the sunny skies of my far off Southern home, where the purling waters gently flowed, I lived, sported, and chased the butterfly—a happy, joyous child. The breath of life's chilling winter had not swept across my youthful face. No breezes cooler than those of spring time e'er had shook the thick dark hair that streamed in masses over my shoulders.

My childhood was one long happy, happy summer's day—happy as the birds and flowers, that with the sunshine play. Thrice happy period of an unclouded life! how memory fondly loves to travel backward; with what tireless feet she journeys and retreads the wandering paths of life, till she again reaches the goal of youthful joys!

The birds sing sweetly now, but their notes are far less joyous; nay, are filled with that sweet pathos, such as Milton and Beethoven felt, when they wrote and sang of departing joy and approaching bliss.

Bright visions of the past; a panorama richly dyed, more gorgeous than the sunset's golden hues, more bright than moonbeam's silvery light! Ye flit before my memory like angels in a dream, and leave upon my mind sweet pictures, reflected like the clear blue sky, mirrored in the silent stream.

The joys of childhood, now they rise before me to-night like beauteous flowers of my pathway; violets, wasted by the dews of love; lillies, whose purity is wafted from the shores of the past; roses, whose perfume will forever last, like something sacred and divine.

Within the blessed vale of memory the joys of my childhood are entwined the tendrils of the vine; or, like the ivy, ever freshly green amid some ruined fortress seen—bright stars of hope which adorn life's pathway shine, mile-stones and guide-boards, at whose base we can cast our laurels and fadeless crowns.

Oh! dim them not, for future years
Hath grief enough in store,
However bright the sunny hours,
Once past return no more.

Except in memory's blissful vale
Where roses fadeless bloom,
Casting a hallowed fragrance round
Like Eden's sweet perfume.

Dim them not, those joys of childhood,
Remembrance's holy tears
Shall water them like dew from Heaven,
Keeping alive for years.

NEWS OF INTEREST

IN London, the other day, there were fifteen conflagrations all raging about the same time.

THE snow was two inches deep on Oliver Creek, Grant county, Oregon, on the 17th of June, and remained on the ground twenty-four hours.

FROM each ear of a Paris belle, at a recent wedding, hung a small gold gridiron, on which was laid a heart formed of garnet, the idea to be conveyed being that of a bleeding heart upon the fiery coals of love.

THE largest room in the world under a single roof, unbroken by pillars or other obstructions, is at St. Petersburg, in Russia, and is six hundred and fifty feet long and one hundred and fifty feet wide. It is used for military displays in rough weather, and can be converted into a ball-room at night.

THE London fire brigade is composed of four hundred men, and is commanded by Captain E. M. Shaw, who has a salary of $6000. The cost of the brigade for 1873 was $330,000, $60,000 of which is paid by the Board of Underwriters. It is probably the most efficiently and economically managed fire department in the world.

CANDY-EATERS are welcome to the appetizing information that terra alba (which is nothing but plaster-of-paris, or gypsum), glucus, lampblack, sulphuric acid, aniline, verdigris, Brunswick green, gamboge, smalt, ultramarine, oil of turpentine, prussic aid, rotten cheese, fusel oil, chrome yellow, and other drugs and compounds, are largely used in the manufacture of chief candies.

THE trade dollar is a silver coin, established by act of Congress in February, 1873. It weighs 420 grains, and is alloyed with copper to the extent of one-tenth its weight. The dollar current before the trade dollar was established weighed 412½ grains, and was of the same degree of fineness. The trade dollar is designed to accommodate traders with China and Japan, and it has already supplanted the Mexican dollar in those countries. It is worth a little over the ordinary dollar; measured by weight its value is $1 01.58, or one dollar one cent and 58-100 of a cent.

THE RUINS OF OPHIR.—Mr. Mauch, an African traveler, believes that he has found the veritable remains of Scriptural Ophir, in lat. 20 deg. 15 sec., S., long. 26 deg. 30 sec. E. One edifice is still 30 feet high, and is formed of granite, with beams of cedar. It stands on a mountain, the sides of which appear to be terraced. It is built in imitation of Solomon's Temple. The second structure, supposed to have been the residence of the Queen of Sheba and her suite, is circular in form, with labyrinthine walls built with mortar. It is still known to the natives as the "House of the Great Princess."

THE PURITY OF ICE.—In addition to the fact that ice is lighter than water, there is another curious thing about it which many persons do not perhaps know—namely, its purity. A lump of ice melted will become distilled water. Water in freezing turns out of it all that is not water—salt, air, coloring matter and all impurities. Frozen sea water makes fresh water ice. If you freeze a basin of indigo water, it will make ice as clear and as white as that made of pure rain water. When the cold is very sudden, these foreign matters have no time to escape, either by rising or sinking, and are thus entangled with the ice, but do not make any part of it.

DOUBLY BRUTAL.—It is difficult to believe that such degradation can exist in a civilized country as that indicated by a recent occurrence at Hanley, England. It was an encounter between a bull-dog and a man, the sickening details of which were given with unnecessary minuteness in the London *Telegraph*, that paper having had a "commissioner" present at the scene. The man met the dog while on all fours, and leaped and snarled with as much ferocity as his canine antagonist, making himself as thoroughly a beast as possible. His method of fighting was to strike the dog with his fists. After eleven rounds the two-legged brute was the victor. The crowd drawn together by the fight was evidently as low in the scale of humanity as can possibly be conceived, and manifested the most revolting animal ferocity, cheering by turns the dog and the scarcely more intelligent brute, as each in turn promised to be the conqueror. That such an occurrence should have been permitted seems a disgrace to the people among whom it came off, and that it was not done in the dark appears evident from the fact of a newspaper commissioner having been present. Compared with such a scene the gladiatorial combats of the ancient arena would be eminently respectable.

THE formation of a National Sportsmen's Association at this time is attracting the attention not only of persons devoted to the taking of animals, fish and fowl for profit, but also of sportsmen and others who are desirous of preventing the wanton destruction of creatures used for the food or comfort of man. This unrestricted slaughter has at length resulted in the total extermination in this country of some varieties of animals and birds, or driving them so far away from populated districts that isolated specimens are now only rarely found in the remotest wildernesses. The beaver, which was once so freely found in Pennsylvania, no longer exists. The deer, which was once so plentiful in various sections of the country, are becoming rare; and various other animals, birds and fish are now the subjects of legislative enactments. While in the general sense it is to the interest of society that this indiscriminate slaughter be stopped, on no one class of men does the duty of guiding public sentiment, instigating harmonious international laws, and attention to a proper regard for the same, devolve so much as on the sportsmen. With a view of procuring a concentration of interest and effort, it is now deemed desirable to form a national organization, that action may be harmonious and uniform in all districts of our common country, and for this purpose a movement has been inaugurated by the "New York State Association for the Protection of Fish and Game," in a preliminary meeting at Niagara Falls on September 9, 1874, to take such action as may then seem advisable.

We cordially commend this movement, and wish it hearty success.

BLUE VIOLETS.

A FAIRY TALE.

BY MRS. E. PETERS.

A little girl sat alone in a garden, weeping. One of the crystal tear-drops chanced to fall into the heart of a rose, when out of the flower sprang a lovely fairy, who gently inquired: "What is the matter, child? Why do you cry?"

"It is," sobbed the little girl, "because my sister Lilla is not kind to me. I love her, but I am almost sure she does not love me at all. She gets provoked with me so easily, and snaps and snarls at me, sometimes even strikes me, and will not lend me any of her books or playthings, unless she feels in the humor. Just now I proposed that we should take a run in the meadow, where daisies twinkle in the breeze like stars in the sky of evening, and gold-belted bees are swinging on the sweet clover-heads; but my sister refused, with a cross 'No, I shan't!' and wished me a thousand miles away."

The fairy listened, and asked:

"What does your sister love? Everybody loves something."

"The only things I think of," the child replied, "that Lilla loves at all times alike are flowers."

"Very good!" said the fairy; "would you like to become a flower? Then your sister will love you, and I shall always be near you for company."

"Indeed, yes," answered the child, hastily drying her eyelashes, "that would be most delightful!"

"Choose, then, the flower you will be," said the fairy. "A rose, perhaps?"

"Oh, not that!" said the child. "Roses are too handsome for me. I should blush so to have people gazing at me. If I might as well, I would rather be a little blue violet; and, as my name is Violet, that seems the proper thing for me to be."

The fairy uttered some words in her own language, waving at the same time a tiny silver wand over the child's head. Immediately the dimpled hands and pale golden hair disappeared, with everything belonging to little Violet, except the blue dress she had on, and that was changed into the most beautiful bed of fragrant violets that ever was seen.

Scattered thickly over the flowers lay the tears which the child had been shedding, only they no longer had the sad look of tears, but sparkled in the sunbeams with ever-changing hues, as if some flecks of the rainbow had dropped from the sky, or a tiny bird of paradise had shed its plumage upon the violet's bed.

Slowly down the garden-path came another child, somewhat older and larger than the first. This was Lilla. She carried a watering-pot, whose contents refreshed the flowers that bordered the path. She was weeping at her work, and so sadly, that the watering-pot needed not to be replenished, but was kept constantly full with the tears which fell from her eyes.

Coming to the violet-bed, already sprinkled with what she took for dew-drops, Lilla paused suddenly, and set down her watering-pot, while an exclamation of delight burst from her lips.

"Why I thought my darlings were scarcely budded," she continued, "and here I find them in perfect bloom."

Thereupon she knelt down and kissed the flowers, saying over and over how fond she was of them.

Little Violet, hearing her sister's words, and feeling her tender, loving touch, was more happy than language can express. She longed to speak to her, and beg her to take a few of the flowers and wear them in her hair, but being unable, she had to rest content with breathing out her most delicate perfume for her sister to enjoy.

Presently, Lilla raised her head, gazed fixedly at the violets a moment, and began to weep afresh.

"Their color is so like the dress dear little Violet wore when she went away," sobbed Lilla.

Gently swayed the rose beside the child, and the fairy appeared.

"What is the matter, little one?" she inquired.

"I am so lonely without my sister," answered the grieving child.

"Oh, indeed!" said the fairy, and said no more, but flitting back into the heart of the rose, she folded one by one the damask leaves over her head—for the sun was going down, and the lengthened shadows fading and blending along the garden-walks.

The following evening Lilla came again into the garden, and sat by the violet-bed and wept, when she heard the soft voice of the fairy asking as before:

"What are you crying for, little girl?"

"For my dear little sister," Lilla replied, between her sobs. "She has gone away, and we do not know what has become of her."

"Oh, indeed!" carelessly repeated the fairy, and disappeared, leaving the child to grieve on unpitied.

The third time Lilla sat beside the violet-bed weeping, and the fairy, standing up in the heart of the rose, put to her the same question.

"How can I help mourning for my lost sister, who was so gentle and good?" said Lilla. "I grieve the more when I remember that I was not always gentle and kind to her. Oh, I miss her sadly, I have no one to play with me now. I would give all the world to have Violet back again."

"Would you?" returned the fairy. "Think again. Are you sure you would give me the first thing I ask for if I can persuade your sister to return to you as she was?"

"Anything—anything," promised the child, with all her heart; and, to prove her sincerity, she extended her hand, with a pretty beaded, silken purse, in which were several silver coins. "Take it, and welcome," said she.

"Keep your property, dear," returned the fairy, smiling; "it will do good somewhere. We have no use for money. What I shall ask you for is something you will be far better off without—you and all your friends. Give me your irritable temper, which leads you often to such unloving words and actions as often wound those who love you most dearly."

"Gladly would I be rid of it," said Lilla, tearfully; "it never did me any good, but mischief."

"Very well," said the fairy. "Remember your promise when you have little Violet back, or the next time she will be changed to an angel; and those who are changed to angels, though you should weep rivers of tears, can never come back to the mortal land any more."

The fairy waved her wand over the violet bed, and lo! there was no more a flower to be seen—they had all gone to seed. But a dear little girl, in a blue dress, flung a pair of dimpled arms around her sister's waist, and nestled her head, with its pale golden ringlets, upon her loving sister's shoulder.

Lilla and Violet, restored to each other, wept for joy. After a long embrace, and many kisses, they ran away towards the meadow, with its buttercups and lambkins—oh, so very happy!

SEEING THE FAIRIES.

BY MYRTLE BLOSSOM.

There was once a little boy, called Harry, who was very anxious to see a fairy. He was not satisfied with hearing of them. He hunted in every corner, hoping to find one. He picked all the four-leaved clovers that he could find, and wished on them with all his might, and then cried when nothing came of it. He hunted about for fairy caps. He looked in the chimney every night, but all of no use, till one day, as luck would have it, he stumbled over the root of a tree and fell. The root was so rotten that it was crushed into powder, and while he was looking at it, up bounced a little old man, saying, "You little rascal, how dare you knock my chimney in?"

"I didn't know that it was your chimney," said Harry; "and how could I help it. I did not mean to tumble. Please excuse me, Mr. Woodgoblin."

"Well, as you are such a nice little boy, perhaps I will," said the goblin, who was also very deceitful. "You are a fine little fellow, I think, and I am fond of children. What would you like best?"

"Oh, good Mr. Woodgoblin, if you would show me a fairy!" said Harry, in a great hurry.

Now this was exactly what the goblin wished him to say, for he was determined to revenge himself on the poor little fellow for knocking in his chimney, but he made a great show of considering the matter, saying, "Fairies! well I don't know about that. Do you think you wouldn't be afraid? There is a fairies' pic-nic not a mile away; but then there are some giants coming, and if I take you, you must not stir so much as a finger. Are you sure you will not be frightened?"

"Oh! I am not afraid," said foolish little Harry, eager to see the giants also.

So the goblin gave Harry his black paw, and leading him through a thicket, showed him an open space covered with grass, and dancing about were some tiny creatures that Harry could hardly see; and while he was peeping through the bushes to get a better look, he heard a great roaring, and looking, saw a monstrous man as tall as his papa's house, and with two great heads as ugly as possible, coming straight towards him. Harry had seen giants in picture-books, but they did not seem a bit like that great creature, who was alive, and twice as ugly as anybody could ever have painted him. Harry was so terrified that he forgot what the goblin had told him about remaining perfectly quiet, and started to run away. Hearing the rustling, the giant began to look among the bushes, and stopping the little boy, caught him between his thumb and finger.

"Oho!" cried he, with a roar, "here is something for my young giants," and putting Harry in his pocket, with his poor little head sticking out, started for home.

They passed straight by his mother's house, and Harry saw her at the window, but she did not hear him, though he called as loud as ever he could. Then Harry cried as if his heart would break; but the giant cared nothing for that, but walked on, taking steps a mile long, till at last he came to his castle.

"Come here," shouted the giant, as soon as he was inside the gate. "Olgantessa, Rorumdin, Highgetout! where are you, darlings? See what papa has brought you to play with; a nice, little, curly-headed boy. Here he is, ducklings. Tie him up in the yard to-night, and to-morrow Rorumdin can make a cage for him."

All the little giants came running on hearing this, greatly delighted. They pulled his hair and they patted it, and made him open and shut his eyes, and pulled his ears to hear him squeak; and then they brought him bread and milk, and told him to squeak for it. Poor Harry did as he was told, with tears running down his face.

"What does he cry for?" asked the little giants. "Doesn't he know that we will get nice bread and milk every day, and have a nice cage built for him? Let us whip him and make him stop crying."

So they whipped him; and then they tied him up in the yard for the night, and left him—a poor little cuddling, curly-headed baby, that had been used to be kissed and put to sleep in his little white bed every night by his dear mamma. Poor Harry's tears fell down like rain, when who should come along but the dear old woman that looks after all little lost children.

"What are you doing here, my darling?" asked this nice old lady.

"I wanted to see the fairies, boo, hoo, hoo! and I went with a goblin, oh, oh, oh! and a giant caught me and brought me home for his children to play with, and they are going to build me a cage to-morrow, and I want my mamma, ow, ow, ow!"

Then that dear, kind old lady cut Harry's rope, and took him under her cloak, and carried him straight home to his mother; and he never after went to see any more fairies.

WISE PROVERBS.—Some falls are the means the happier to rise. The surest prophesying is after the event. It's a good divine that follows his own instructions. He that has a good nose, thinks that everybody is speaking of it. Who stumbles twice over the same stone deserves a broken shin. He who would stop every man's mouth must have a great deal of meal. He that defers his charity, is rather liberal of another man's than his own. Excuse is Lie's stepsister. There must be falls; the rising again is all. That is wisdom which is wisdom in the end. Hope is a good sance, but a light kish. Carry a looking-glass inside of yourself as well as outside. The barber was asked what he saw at Court. "The king was ill-shaven," quoth he.

OUR CONSECRATIONS.

BY ISABELLA LAW.

From out each yesterday of life
All have some precious store to keep:
Some little store of golden worth,
Some treasure rescued from the deep
Of those gone hours; ere yet the waves
Of time have closed their quiet graves.

Thrice dark of all dark days that one
Which leaves no brightness from its hours,
No nightingale to sing at eve,
No after fragrance from its flowers,
No holy dew distilled from Heaven,
To consecrate it fresh at even.

Blessed art thou, heart that yearnest (though
The tears that dim thine eyes be vain)
To call back something from thy past,
Some yesterday to life again,
The gladdest summer of our years
We consecrate by autumn tears.

Each consecrates some precious part,
Some secret store of hidden worth:
We garner each our harvest sheaves
Our golden memories of earth,
Against the winter time of need,
That we may after come and feed.

And when the yesterdays of life
Shall all be numbered, still I deem
Each one shall have his store to keep,
His fadeless relic of earth's dream:
Some shadows softened by God's light,
Some star that made his journey bright.

FACE TO FACE;

OR,

SINNING FOR HER SAKE!

BY THE AUTHOR OF "GERALD," "TWICE WON," ETC.

[This serial was commenced in No. 3, Vol. 58. Back numbers can be obtained from all newsdealers throughout the United States, or direct from this office.]

CHAPTER X.

SHOWING THAT IT IS NOT ONLY POACHERS WHO LAY SNARES.

Lady Clementine did not appear at luncheon. The favorite excuse of a bad headache served to explain her absence, and Mr. Carthen, although he could not tell why, and chided himself for the unkindness of the reflection, felt greatly relieved at her absence. He had Lina all to himself, as it were.

She sat next to him; and, though she was rather shy and silent, he was not inclined to take offence at that which, in a sensitive girl, is always a compliment, rather than a discourtesy.

She had discarded the "print" dress, and wore a dark blue merino, relieved at the throat and wrists by a linen collar and cuffs. She looked charming so, though indeed he had no fault to find with her toilette before.

When he told her of their unsuccessful search the tears came into her blue eyes, and she seemed really distressed.

"I am afraid we must give up hoping now," she said; "it is evident the poor man must have been killed."

"I fear so, Lady Lina."

"It is very shocking; I wonder who could have done it."

"I have a notion that Joe Lay had something to do with it."

"He did not look like an innocent man," the earl remarked; "but then he has such a sinister expression naturally that it may be unfair to judge him."

"And, somehow, we would not wish him to be found out."

"Why, Lina," said her mother, in a surprised tone, "what can you mean? That is just what every one must wish."

"I can't, mamma."

"My dear child, pray explain yourself."

"Nothing can bring poor Flax to life now, so to hang a man is not to redeem him."

"You are too merciful, Lady Lina," said Mr. Carthen, gently.

"If the guilty are always to escape, there is nothing to deter others from imitating their crimes."

"True. And yet——"

"You would save them all?"

"I would keep them in prison for the rest of their lives."

"I am not sure but what it is more merciful to let them die."

"At least, they have time for repentance then."

"Lina has such odd notions," said Lady Dacre.

Lina laughed gaily.

"I only speak according to my own feelings, and without any understanding of how such a system would work. Of course, other people know best. It would have been tried before this, no doubt, if it had been likely to succeed."

"I don't think it would answer; and, besides, Lady Lina, the Bible says, 'A life for a life.'"

"Of course, I should never presume to question anything I might find there."

"I am sure of that."

His glance emphasized his words so emphatically that Lina's eyes dropped under it, and a crimson blush stole up to the very roots of her blonde hair.

"You are going to see Mrs. Flax this afternoon?" Mr. Carthen asked, presently.

Lina bowed her head in token of assent.

"Will you undertake a little commission for me?"

"With pleasure."

"The poor woman finds it hard to get on, I hear, now that the bread-winner is gone. Perhaps you will be kind enough to give her that from me."

The money was folded in paper, so that Lina could not tell exactly what it was.

Lina thanked him with a smile, and soon after this Mr. Carthen rose, saying he must get home, as he had left word with his head keeper to meet him at the hall by three o'clock to concert measures for staying further depredations on the part of the poachers.

Lawrence, his head man, was sturdy, with muscular arms and an appearance of great fortitude and strength. Mr. Carthen ordered the butler to take him into his pantry and give him something to eat, and then he was brought back into the library, and Mr. Carthen proceeded to explain what he wanted done.

"I have ordered some decoy pheasants at Dawford," he said, "and I want the wood thoroughly well searched for traps. Wherever they can be found I should like them to be taken away, and a pheasant tied to the nearest tree, just where they would be likely to see it. I mean to go out with you myself the day after to-morrow. I am quite determined to catch these men, if only for the sake of giving them a lesson."

"I think old Mark Graysome is at the head of it, sir."

"I am afraid so; and, really, he has had such an immunity given him, on account of his age, that it is quite time it was put a stop to. I should be glad, also, to have some excuse for detaining Joe Lay until we can find out something about poor Flax's untimely fate."

"Then you think he is murdered, sir."

"Yes; don't you."

"I never had any doubt about it myself, sir."

"But it seems odd that we get no clue."

"They've buried him somewhere, you may depend, sir."

"I should almost fear so."

"But it will be found out yet, sir, I fancy. Mrs. Flax is dead set against them, only she keeps herself to herself, and says nothing to anybody."

"And very wise, too."

"Ah, sir! she knows what she's about; she always was a far-seeing woman."

"Then it is settled, Lawrence? I am going out with you myself the night after next?"

"I am sorry to hear that, sir."

"Why?"

"Because I think there's rather a desperate set about, sir, and a man who commits one crime would as easy commit another."

"Yes, if he could; but I fancy that you and I are a good match for three poachers, Lawrence; and there's Scourby and Lane can come, too."

"I wish you'd let us go alone, sir."

"I tell you what, Lawrence, you'd brave any danger yourself, and yet you try to make a coward of me. Is that quite fair?"

"You have so much to lose, sir."

"Nay; I have no wife or children, and you have both."

"But, you see, sir, I wouldn't let them stand between me and my duty."

"You never do, Lawrence, I'll be bound."

"I try not, sir."

"And you know," said his master, quietly, "that I should never allow them to want, supposing that you were taken away."

"You are very good, sir; but me and my Jane settled, when we got married, that we'd take the present as it came, and make the best of it, leaving the future to take care of itself. It's a deal of happiness we've got out of that agreement, and it doesn't hinder us from putting by here and there, when we can spare it."

"That was a good rule."

"We have found it so, sir."

"But you understand that I mean to go out with you, Lawrence?"

"I am sorry, sir."

"You'd rather have me fast asleep, in a warm bed, leaving you to take all the risk?"

"It's my place, and what I am paid for, sir," returned the man.

"I think my going out will have a good effect. It will show that I am thoroughly determined and roused. Old Mark is not only a most resolute poacher himself, but he is bringing up his son in the same way. I don't think Nat is a bad lad, if he were left alone. I have often thought that I should like to get him right away from here, and give him a chance."

"I am almost afraid it is too late, sir. I have always noticed that when a man takes a fancy to that kind of life, nothing cures him. The excitement is pleasant, I suppose; and, of course, if you haven't got a conscience, that can't stand in the way."

"Only that Nat is but young yet."

"He has been brought up to poaching from the cradle."

"I fear so."

"And, unfortunately, he's got very thick with that Joe Lay, who's a terrible bad character, sir, and would ruin any one he took up with."

"I want to get rid of him out of this part of the country, if I can, supposing we can't prove that he had anything to do with Flax's death. I am sorry that he ever saw anything in our neighborhood to induce him to remain in it."

"He belongs to Oaklands, sir."

"Does he? I never remember seeing him until lately."

"He has been to sea several years, sir; and you were away a good deal at one time—at school and college—so I dare say you don't recollect much about him. But he was here when he was about twenty, and then he used to court Mary Flax."

"Mary Flax?"

"Yes, sir."

"Of course she would have nothing to say to him?"

"She was much too superior to take up with such as he. He'd have broke her heart in six months, sir."

"Ah, that he would! And now, Lawrence, you go into Dawford, and get the pheasants. Be as secret about it as you can, and mind that you search the wood carefully for traps the day after to-morrow, and place the pheasants as I described. I fancy there is a moon now, is there not?"

"It's only in its first quarter, sir."

"We don't want it to be too light."

"No, sir; perhaps not."

"And, Lawrence, tell Mr. Langley to be good enough not to mention what we have bought. We can't keep it too quiet."

Lawrence bowed respectfully, and left.

CHAPTER XI.

LANSDOWN BY MOONLIGHT.

The clock in the church tower was striking eleven, as Lawrence, with Scourby and Lane in attendance, went to the Hall; and, according to the instructions received, walked straight into the house, and knocked cautiously at the library door.

Mr. Carthen appeared.

He wore a thick great coat, and he carried a pistol in his hand. His face, as the men saw it, for one minute before he put out the lamp, looked grave and resolute.

"It is very cold," Mr. Carthen said, "and the wind is high."

"But it's in the right direction for us, sir," Lawrence replied. "It will blow any sound from Lansdown right into our ears."

"Have you heard anything of the poachers' movements?"

"They set a good many traps last night, sir; so you're sure they'll be there to see after them. We took five this morning—me and Scourby—and put the pheasants just over."

"Tied to the branches, I suppose?"

"Yes, sir; and they looked so natural that I couldn't have told myself, if I hadn't known."

"I think we shall get them this time," said Mr. Carthen, with a certain elation.

"I hope we may, sir; they've balked us pretty often, and it's time they had a sharp lesson."

"If we could catch old Mark, we should be safe for a time, at least. He is an incorrigible offender, and, moreover, he keeps up the spirit of the thing, by his daring and success. A month of prison, as far as he is concerned, would do more harm to poaching generally than all your care."

"I am sure of that, sir."

"Then try after the old man first. Only, mind and don't hurt him. Have any of you firearms?"

"I have a gun, sir," Lawrence said.

"And Scourby and Lane?"

"Have good thick sticks, sir."

"Quite enough, too. Don't use your gun, unless it were to save your life."

"No, sir; if it comes to a face-to-face struggle, and it's my only chance, that would be different. But even then I should try not to wound him dangerously."

"We shall be too strong, for them. I don't fancy they will turn."

"They will give us a chase, sir, most likely. If it was a last chance, they might try to disable us from securing them; but I think we shall have them without any violence. I've brought Pincher with me, and he's the best dog at scenting out a poacher I ever came across. He hates them almost as much as his master does, sir."

"That's a loyal Pincher," said Mr. Carthen, stroking the dog's black muzzle with his glove.

"Have a care, sir; he's terrible fierce. I keep him tied up most ways, unless he's wanted. But I never go into the woods at night without him. As long as you don't touch him, he's all right; but he can't bear being meddled with by strangers."

They entered the wood, now, and Mr. Carthen lowered his voice to a whisper:

"Let Pincher go first."

Lawrence took the next place, as in duty bound, but Mr. Carthen told him softly, but authoritatively, to step one side, and took up his position behind Pincher, whose tail wagged gently, from time to time, as if he scented mischief, and enjoyed the prospect.

They went on in silence for a while. Paths had been cut out in the wood for the convenience of Mr. Carthen and his friends, when they went out shooting; and although the short stumps and tangled briars got in their way occasionally, the route was, so far, tolerably clear. They might have wished for a little more light, for the moon barely penetrated the shadow of the branches; and, even when it did, there were but a few faint, struggling beams to cheer them. Once Mr. Carthen stumbled; but he only jested as he rose to his feet again, and declared that he had not thought it could be so sweet and pleasant in the woods at night.

"If ever I am ruined, I shall get a place as keeper," he said, laughingly; but Lawrence shook his head.

"It's all very well for once, sir."

"Ah, well; I expect that does make a difference," replied the other, good-naturedly, and walked on.

Presently he turned to the gamekeeper.

"I suppose we are to lay up out of the way until we hear some sign or sound; isn't that it?"

"I thought so, sir, if you approve."

"You know best, of course."

"There's the hut, sir; we should be out of sight there."

"True. And the dog?"

"Will lay as quiet as a mouse, sir, if I tell him to. He's accustomed to this kind of work."

The hut was just in the centre of the wood, and had been built for the accommodation of the woodmen. If a fire had been practicable, it would have been very comfortable; but, of course, that was impossible. The smell of the smoke, and the reflection, would have betrayed their whereabouts to the poachers, and enabled these last to keep out of the snare.

They all crept in through the low door, and Pincher crouched across the threshold, mute, and yet with his ears evidently on the alert, acted as sentinel. He was listening, and meant to give them sharp warning of the approach either of friend or foe. Mr. Carthen handled a cigar rather longingly, but refrained. He warmed and cheered himself instead, by thinking of Lady Lina, standing, as he had last seen her, with her soft eyes raised shyly to his face; and, in spite of her earnest efforts, betraying the secret of her heart to his eager glance.

"My darling!" he muttered to himself, and closed his arms tightly across his breast, as if he were taking her into them, and never meant her to get out of them again.

At this minute Pincher pricked up his ears, and growled ever so softly.

"Good dog, whist now!" said Lawrence, under his breath.

"Are they near us?" whispered Mr. Carthen.

"Not yet, sir; but Pincher has his suspicions, I see. They are somewhere in the wood, anyhow."

"I wish the wind weren't so high. We shall hardly be able to distinguish between this and the crackling of the boughs as they come through them."

"Pincher will know the difference, sir, never fear."

Another dead silence, and Pincher raised himself on his haunches, and seemed to give his whole attention to what was passing around.

Mr. Carthen held his breath, and felt a strange kind of excitement creeping over him. The utter stillness, broken only at intervals by a faint gust of wind, that went sighing over the tree-tops, the feeling of suspense which made his blood quicken, until it went tingling to his very finger ends—all this was a new experience to Mr. Carthen, and he found it pleasant and stimulating.

Pincher growled again.

"They are nearer now, sir," whispered Lawrence. "One of their traps wasn't very far off here, but I expect they'll avoid the hut as much as possible. We shan't know just where they are until they fire, and I expect they'll visit all their traps first. Whist, Pincher! Down, sir!"

Pincher returned to his former attitude, but it was plain to see that he was anxious and uneasy. It seemed a full hour, though it was not probably more than half this, when they heard the sharp report of a gun.

"Now, sir," said Lawrence, springing to his feet; "they are just near the old oak that was blasted with lightning a year back. There was a trap set there, which I found, and laid a better one for them before I came away. We should do well not to lose a minute."

"Come on, I am ready."

"You must let me go first now, sir," said Lawrence. "I fancy I know the way best."

"Very well; only be quick."

Silently and swiftly they threaded their way through the tangled underwood. There was no regular road here, only a small serpentine path, clogged with brambles, and stifled with rank undergrowth.

But Lawrence seemed to know every inch of the road by heart, and his whispered warnings saved Mr. Carthen from many a downfall. They came, presently, to an open space; and now Pincher grew difficult of control. He gave a short, snapping growl, and bounded up savagely, and tried to break away.

"It's strange, sir," said Lawrence, under his breath; "but I'll wager Joe Lay is amongst them. Pincher can't abide him, and will growl and bark for nearly an hour if he only passes our gate."

"Hark!"

"There's voices!"

"And not twenty yards distant."

The last part of this dialogue was carried on in such a faint whisper, that if their heads had not been close together it would have been impossible for either to have heard.

"I think they have no suspicion."

"I think not, sir."

"We must dash in upon them suddenly."

Lawrence took Pincher by the throat, and half throttled him. He was silent for a minute, recovering his breath; and by this time there were only a few bushes between them and the poachers. Lawrence made one stride forward; his arm was outstretched; the very breath stopped on his lips, in his eager suspense. One second, and one only, and he must have secured his man; but Pincher sprang forward past him, with a fierce bark, and the opportunity was lost.

Silently, Joe slipped under a bush, and before Nat could kick off the animal he was out of sight. So skillfully had he managed this, that Mr. Carthen and Lawrence could not even be sure that he had been there at all.

Old Mark gave himself up for lost. He had been near detection often, but never so near as this.

"Never mind about me, lad," he said, to his son; "but get you away as fast as you can."

"No, father!" said Nat, resolutely; "you shall go first. You don't think I'd care to be free, when you was in prison?"

"It's no use giving them the satisfaction of saying they have got us both."

"Better than they should have the satisfaction of saying that I was a sneak and a coward, and left my own father in the lurch."

"You're a good lad," muttered the old man, and dashed on with new energy. "I'll crack every sinew before they shall take the boy," he said to himself; whereas Nat muttered low:

"They shan't catch father, not if I know it; only for that confounded dog."

But Pincher's attention seemed to be divided. He evidently scented Joe, vaguely, and would rather have made sure of him than have anything to do with the others. When his master urged him on, he obeyed, but with a reluctance and lack of spirit that was quite evident to all.

Mr. Carthen said, breathlessly:

"I think the poachers must have separated; Pincher seems troubled."

"We've missed Joe Lay, sir, I'm afraid."

"And old Mark?"

"That's him in front, I fancy."

"You couldn't swear to it?"

"I should be loth, sir."

"Catch him, and then you may."

But this was easier said than done. Old Mark knew the wood even better than Lawrence; and he had the advantage of a slight start. Under such excitement as this, he was as active as ever he had been, and kept his advantage; whilst Nat, with his powerful arm, grasped hold of the boughs as he passed, and swung them behind him, that they might bruise the faces of his pursuers.

Once Lawrence stepped back, almost blinded.

"Confound them!" he said, bitterly. "I do believe they will get away from us after all."

"Let me go first," said Mr. Carthen.

Lawrence let him pass.

"I can only blame myself now if we do not succeed," said his master. "Keep Pincher in; he only gets in the way, and does no good."

Even this moment's pause, whilst they were changing places, had told in favor of the poachers. Mark, with his long stride, was making way, and yet sparing his breath, as much as he dared too, for when they should get into the open ground where everything must depend upon speed.

Nat was as strong as a young lion, naturally, and his courage rose every minute. It was clear that Lawrence had made a mistake in bringing the dog; for, in spite of all his efforts, it was almost impossible to keep him back.

Old Mark had half halted to draw a clear breath, and Nat, being behind him, had, per force, halted, too. It seemed to Mr. Carthen that he had only to stretch out his hand, and make a few paces forward, and secure his prey, when Pincher sprang out of Lawrence's grasp and got between his feet. He stumbled and fell. He was a patient man, but, almost unconsciously, an oath passed between his clenched teeth. He gave the dog a kick, which sent him reeling amongst the underwood, and sprang to his feet again. But there was no sign now of either of the men.

"Confound that animal!" said Mr. Carthen; "you ought to have left him at home, Lawrence!"

"So I see, sir; but I never knew him to behave like this before. Knowing his dislike to Lay, I thought he would be sure to help us."

"If Lay was there, he has made off in another direction, then?"

"He must have done; and if Pincher had been allowed to follow him up it would have been all right. But turning him off the trace, put him out of temper and unsettled him."

"We sha'n't get them now."

"We may, sir; I don't give up yet."

"They've got another start."

"Only they might have an accident as well as us, sir."

"They seem to be pretty sure of their ground."

"If it's Mark Greysome, sir, as I suspect, he knows every inch of the wood by heart."

"No doubt."

"And so does his son."

"Worse luck."

"I fancy they will get to the opening near Lansdown Point, if they can. That isn't very far from old Mark's cottage."

"On, then!"

Presently they caught a glimpse of the poachers again, but it was only a glimpse.

Mr. Carthen had scarcely pointed them out, before they disappeared.

"They are making for the Point, sir. I thought they would."

"Couldn't we intercept them, anyhow?"

"Supposing they were to turn off, sir, before they get there—we should miss them entirely, then."

"We might as well run the risk; we sha'n't have them as it is."

"Well, sir, it does begin to look doubtful," returned the keeper.

"Where are we to go now, then?"

"Hadn't I better show you, sir?"

"Yes; only don't let us waste time," was the quick reply.

"There's a narrow path to the right, that leads straight up to the Point; only, as I said before, if they turn off anywhere, we shall certainly miss them."

"Never mind; do as I tell you."

Mr. Carthen spoke, if not sharply, authoritatively. He was more excited than he ever remembered to have been before; and finding himself baffled so continually, roused his pride and stimulated his temper.

He had fancied, perhaps, that because he, the master, was there, it must needs be easy to catch these men; and, lo! they had balked him at every turn, and Mr. Carthen was not accustomed to opposition.

Lawrence saw that he was not overpleased; and, conscious that Pincher had ruined all their chances, thought it wisest to be silent. So he walked on before his master, copying the length of his stride, emulating his energy, but dumb. Pincher, in deep disgrace, and conscious of the fact, brought up the rear.

Not a sound broke the silence for awhile but the eirie sough of the wind, or the creaking of some huge branch overhead. Presently they came to the open space which edged the wood, and beyond this, with the moon's pale crescent beaming down upon it sadly, was Lansdown Point.

It was formed by a clump of high logs, and beyond them there was a small, stagnant pool, green with water-weeds. It was a wierd-looking spot seen by this light, and the shadows about it seemed to assume grotesque shapes and movements, cheating them with the appearance of life, which might not be there after all.

Mr. Carthen stood still, and scanned the place keenly.

"I see something there, Lawrence," he whispered, pointing with his finger to the Point.

"It's only the shadows, sir."

"I think not; I should take it for a man."

"If we creep round the skirt of the wood, sir, we might get a good deal nearer."

"Very well."

"You are right, sir," said Lawrence, when they were closer to the point; "it is a man."

"Now, then, for a spring, and all together. Look sharp, Scourby!"

"Ready, sir."

Mr. Carthen gave the signal, in a voice thrilling with eagerness.

"Now!"

Mr. Carthen was the first there—the first to seize the man by the shoulders. He turned him around; and, as the wierd, white light fell on his face, darkened by the flickering shadows, they all saw, with a kind of dread that was more like a prophetic instinct than a feeling, that it was Tommy Wilson, the idiot!

CHAPTER XII.

ARIADNE.

Day after day Milly Lowe waited for some sign of her lover. It seemed impossible that he should have forsaken her thus, without a word of explanation or regret. If she were willing to brave her father's anger for his sake, surely he should not draw back!

It seemed to her cruel, indeed, that he should neither come nor write.

"If he wishes to give me up, he might tell me so," she thought, "and not let me suffer this terrible suspense. Perhaps he may have left some message for me with old Nanny. I will go and see."

Milly tied all her sunny curls into a little cottage bonnet, trimmed neatly with blue ribbons, wrapped her slender figure in a warm cloak, and tripped off to old Nanny's house.

She had scarcely crossed the threshold of the door before she saw Tommy Wilson, feeding the cow out of his own hand, creep stealthily along the wall towards her.

She walked on as far as the gate, and then she stopped for him to join her. Milly contorted her pretty mouth, and tried to look very serious.

"How dare you watch me?" she said, indignantly. "You are a false-hearted, cowardly, cruel fellow, and I will never do you a kindness or speak gently to you again! What right had you to betray me to my father that night, and then grin over your cruel work? Ah, you understand, I can see! You may deceive others, but you don't deceive me. You are more fool than knave, after all, and I hate you, Tommy Wilson! Do you hear? I hate you!"

Tommy seemed to understand the last sentence anyhow, for his face grew livid, and his broad lips were contorted by a sudden spasm of pain.

"Yes," she went on, vehemently; "I liked you before you did this wicked act, and I always called you 'Poor Tommy,' but I'll never call you that again, but cruel Tommy, mean Tommy, whom I hate!"

Milly had worked herself up into quite a passion. Remembering how much she had lost, and what pain she was suffering through Tommy's treachery, and knowing her power over this strange lad, she was inclined to be merciless.

Tommy's face grew almost awful in his agony at her reproach; and, in his struggle to speak, he uttered gutteral cries that were like those of some animal in sharp pain.

"Go back to your cows," said Milly, waving her hand to point him the way. "I told you that I hated you, and could'nt bear you in my sight!"

Tommy struggled anew, and it seemed almost as if he pronounced the word "hate;" appealingly first, then threatingly.

"And I tell you what, wicked Tommy; just keep out of Herbert's way, or he'll give you the thrashing you deserve!"

At the sound of this name, which was evidently like a cruel scourge lacerating his heart, Tommy uttered a cry more bitter and piercing even than the last, and doubled his ponderous fist menacingly.

Milly laughed a soft, scornful little laugh.

"I should think he could master you," she said, and turned on her heel in utter disdain, as if his action had cast a slur on her lover's courage.

She walked down the lane briskly. When she got to the end she turned. There sat Tommy astride the wall, calm now, but watchful.

Milly shrugged her shoulders scornfully and marched on. She never thought to look behind her again, until she came to old Nannie's cottage; and then, as she opened the door, she involuntarily glanced back along the road she had come.

Tommy, taken by surprise, was visible for a minute, in a neighboring copse, but he quickly disappeared from sight, no doubt flattering himself that he had not been perceived.

Milly was so accustomed to Tommy and his odd ways, and had always found him so docile in her hands, that it never struck her to be afraid. She divined at once his object. He, of course, thought that in spite of Mr. Lowe's prohibition, which even Tommy must have understood, by his violent gestures, Herbert Benson was coming to see Milly, and that the place of their meeting was to be old Nanny's cottage.

So that, when Milly, answering old Nanny's summons to enter, shut herself in as quickly as possible in order to keep out the cold, which did not suit the other's rheumatism, Tommy crept closer and closer, until, stopping behind a shrub that darkened Nanny's window, he could see into the interior of the costage whenever he chose.

Milly sat down and began to warm her finger-tips at the fire. She did not like to enter upon the subject of her visit at once, for fear of looking selfish, so she slipped her hand into her pocket and brought out a shilling, which she put gently into old Nanny's palm.

"Everything is so dear this winter, dame; although I hope Herbert—I mean Mr. Benson—does not let you want."

This was a neat way of introducing his name, and Milly prided herself upon it greatly.

"Not he, Miss Milly; it wouldn't be like him if he did."

"He's so good!" murmured Milly, fervently.

"I be rather hard of hearing, Miss."

"It's very cold dame."

"Ah, and my rheumatics are terrible trying," replied Nanny, unsuspiciously. "You young folks dont know what such things are, luckily for you."

"Only about Mr. Herbert?"

"I haven't seen much of him lately, miss; he's troubled in his mind, I'm thinking, and doesn't care for old Nanny's company."

"What should trouble him?" inquired Milly, as innocent as any lamb.

"Don't you be pretending not to know, Miss Milly."

"But I really don't, upon my honor."

"It's all about you."

"What have I done, dame?"

"Well, you see, your father being so set against your marriage——"

"That's got nothing to do with me. I can't help what my father says or does."

"Only it's very disheartening."

"I've done my best to make him forget all this. I have braved my father's displeasure over and over again, in order to comfort him, and now—" here Milly's voice began to falter—"and now he deserts me."

"He says it is his duty, Miss Milly."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Milly, sharply. "How could it be his duty?"

"I'm sure he'd rather it wasn't, if that is all. He seemed as if he couldn't bear your name spoken that morning he was here."

"What morning was that?"

"The morning after poor Flax's disappearance."

"And what did he say then?"

"That he wished he was dead."

"And what else?"

"That your father was right to prevent your marriage."

"That he was right? Oh, surely, Nanny, you must have been mistaken?"

"No, Miss Milly. He looked terrible ill and harrassed that morning, and he said he'd been out in the wood all night. He told me, too, that although Mr. Lowe was right to separate you, he ought to have let him know earlier."

"Go on," said Milly feverishly.

"He said that you was a great deal wrong, and the worst of it was, that it could never be made right."

"What could he mean?"

"He also threatened to turn poacher."

"Threatened to turn poacher! Nanny, do you think he could have been in his right mind?"

"There was no sign of his being otherwise."

"Did he tell you anything more?"

"Yes; he said I musn't be surprised at anything I heard of him, for he was well nigh tired of his life."

Milly lifted her eyes, streaming with tears, to old Nanny's face.

"Oh, Nanny, if I only could see him I am sure I could comfort him!"

"It wouldn't be of any use, Miss Milly. There's something on his mind more than he means to let any of us know. He seemed full of care and trouble that morning; and when I was trying to comfort him a bit by telling him how I got over burying my poor children, 'Ah, Nanny,' says he, 'such trials are not the worst. I should grieve less if Milly were dead, than I grieve now."

"Nanny, what can it be? There's some awful mystery in it all. It isn't a week ago that Herbert vowed nothing should part us, and he'd wait for me, even to the end of his life, willingly."

"Well, Miss Milly, it's no use worreting yourself about it. I dare say it will come all right in time."

"But he ought to explain what's the matter; oughtn't he, Nanny? It's very cruel to keep me in this suspense."

"Well, dearie, it does seem hard; only, perhaps, he knows better about it than we do; and if he's been told something, and forbidden to speak about it, he must keep his promise."

"He'd no business to make one."

"He mightn't have thought there was anything particular a-coming."

"You see, people should take care, Nanny, when another person's happiness is concerned as well as their own," said poor Milly, plaintively.

"Ah, well, Miss Milly, if we was all perfect, and never did wrong, we might as well call this heaven at once, for that is what it would be like."

"I am nearly broken-hearted, Nanny."

"That's just the way Mr. Herbert speaks, and looks so mourufal, too."

"I wish I could see him, if it was only for a minute."

"You might come here any time, Miss Milly, only I've got my doubts whether he'd meet you. He's just like his poor mother for one thing—he's so set in his notions."

"But you don't think he'd refuse to see me?"

"Yes, I do, miss."

"But why? What have I done?"

"There's something in the wind, you may depend, or he wouldn't have spoke as he did."

"You don't think he's giving me up because my father told him I shouldn't have any fortune? Mind," she added, emphatically, "if you say 'yes,' I shall never like you as long as I live, and sha'n't believe you one bit, either."

"What's the use of my speaking then," said old Nanny, smilingly, "if I mustn't give my right meaning?"

"Oh, but you don't think so?" sighed Milly, in a tone of great distress.

"I never said such a thing, Miss Milly. I'd bite my tongue almost in two, if I thought it could say such a falsehood of Master Herbert, whom I nursed in these very arms, when he was a poor weakly little baby. No, it's nothing of that kind, you may depend."

"But what can it be then?"

"It's no use asking me. I've told you all I know, or am likely to know. Master Herbert can be pretty close when he likes."

"I wish I'd got the courage to go and marry some one else, I do," sobbed Milly.

"Lord love the child! What would be the use of that?"

"It would bring him to his senses."

"When it was too late to be of any use."

"And that would serve him just right."

"Perhaps so; only you must remember you'd get all the sorrow of that. He would be free, and you wouldn't."

"You're sure I couldn't do any such thing, Nanny?"

"I'm sure you'd be very foolish if you did."

"Of course you take his part," said Milly, petulantly; "because you like him better than you like me. But I know it's very cruel of him to treat me like this."

"He doesn't mean to be cruel, Miss Milly."

"Then he ought to have said something."

"So he will, when he gets an opportunity; you may be sure of that."

"He should make an opportunity."

"If you'll appoint to meet him here any day, I'll let him know."

"I think to-morrow will do, Nanny."

"Will Mr. Lowe be out?"

"Never mind; I dare say I can manage to slip away."

"Then I shall tell Mr. Herbert to be here. Only, about the time?"

"Supposing we say four o'clock?"

"I've no doubt that would suit him well enough."

"Very well, then, it's settled. Only, Nanny, don't let him fancy that I want him to come."

Old Nanny nodded her head sagaciously.

"I'll arrange it all nicely, never you fear. I'll say you don't care whether he comes or not."

"Not exactly that."

"What must it be, then?"

"Anything you like, Nanny; but he mustn't be made too conceited, you know," replied Milly, with a little flickering smile on her sweet lips.

She gathered her skirts together, and prepared to depart.

"It's almost dark, Miss Milly; sha'n't you be afraid?"

"Not I. Who would hurt me?"

"No one in his senses."

"Very well; I am pretty safe."

Milly bade old Nanny good evening and went out. It was twilight by this time; for the day closed early. She walked on briskly, without a thought of fear; but she fancied sometimes that she heard a step behind her. When she got to her own gate, she turned, and then she distinctly saw a shadowy figure cross the road swiftly, as if to get out of her sight, and disappear into one of the dark lodges near the farmyard.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

MATCH-MAKING.

The young lady readers of the Post are sure to be attracted to this little article by its heading. They will expect therefrom a lively dissertation on the art and mystery of baiting the matrimonial trap for eligible birds. This is not an ungallant journal, but for once it takes the liberty of disappointing youth and beauty, to say nothing of the mature and thoughtful matrons who have their daughters' best interests at heart. The matches of which it is our cue to speak, are not of the kind supposed to be made in heaven, and which some libellous persons say are tipped with combustible elements in a lower locality. In short, they are *Lucifer* matches—of which so many billions of billions are manufactured annually. Austria, the principal match-maker of Europe, produces no less than two thousand five hundred *tons* of them every year, for exportation merely. In the United States, we use, it is computed, between three and four hundred millions of matches daily—or at the rate of ten per day for each unit of the sum total of the population. In England the individual average is only eight per day.

The manufacture of Lucifer matches is attended with considerable danger, owing to the inflammable nature of the materials employed (a remark, by the way, which applies with equal force to connubial match-making). The persons employed in tipping the splints are liable to be attacked with a distressing complaint, known as the "jaw disease," produced by the fumes of the phosphorus which forms a part of the igneous composition; but this, we learn, is to be hereafter avoided by using a new modification of the article, which is innocuous and without odor. Paraffine may also be employed instead of sulphur, as a means of conveying combustion to the splint; and thus the noxious sulphurous fume, which the ordinary match gives out, is done away with. But a more important improvement than either of these has lately been introduced, to prevent the possibility of Lucifer matches being ignited by accidental friction. It consists in dividing the composition into two parts, placing the one on the end of the splint, and the other, containing the phosphorus, on the side of the box. By this means the match will only take fire when rubbed against the box. Nothing can be more simple and safe than the new plan, and we hope it will be generally adopted.

GREAT effort from great motives is the best definition of a happy life. The easiest labor is a burthen to him who has no motives for performing it.

ONE WAY TO GET A HUSBAND.

BY LU.

ACT FIRST.

"This will never do—*never!* One year a widow, two children to support, and only about two hundred dollars left. I can't work, and Flora and Alfred must be educated. Let me see," and the little widow leaned back in her chair, beating a tattoo on the floor with her pretty foot. "If I was only acquainted with the people here I'd take my chance of getting a rich husband with any young girl. I'm only twenty-five, and, if I can believe my friends, am pretty; and grief and widows' weeds are *so* becoming. If I only knew somebody! There's Mr. Stuart—he's a rich old bachelor; I think he would do very well, but the trouble is to get an introduction. Let me think."

Cora Vernon upon this fell into what is vulgarly called a "brown study." Her blue eyes were bent upon the floor, trouble rested upon her fair brow, her pretty lips pouted, her little hands worked restlessly with a ribbon of her dress. Suddenly her face lighted up—a new thought had occurred to her. She sprang to her feet, and danced about the floor, fun sparkling in her eyes.

"Eureka! Eureka! That will do! I know that will do, and I'll try it now."

She immediately proceeded to put her bright thought into execution. She brought out a tiny little writing-desk, and seated herself before it.

"Poor Charley," she sighed, "you little know for what you taught me to write coarse, like a man! I'll make use of it this time, and then I'll forget the accomplishment."

Selecting a plain large sheet of paper, such as gentlemen use, with many pauses to think and many merry laughs, she wrote in large, fair hand the following epistle:

MR. JOSEPH STUART:—*Dear Sir*—I hope you will not feel that I take an unwarrantable liberty in addressing you this letter. I should hesitate to do so but that I know your noble and superior mind will appreciate disinterested friendship, without being a prey to vulgar distrust.

My business is stated in a few words. It is a desire to bring together two people whom I believe eminently calculated to make each other happy. If you knew of a bewitching little widow—young, pretty and reported rich—whose heart was longing for an object on which to lavish its affections, wouldn't you like to make her happy, and in so doing make yourself thrice blessed? Such a widow do I know. Such an one you pass every day, in a lovely little brown cottage, between your house and office.

"A word to the wise," etc.

Your sincere WELL-WISHER.

"There!" soliloquised the little lady, with a laugh and a coquettish toss of the head, "I think that'll do. He certainly will never pass the only brown cottage in town without just a glance of curiosity, and, once I get his attention, I *think* I can manage an old bachelor. Anyway, it's worth trying."

The momentous epistle was sealed, directed, and delivered into the post-office by the lady herself.

ACT SECOND.

"John, did you get any letters?"

"One, sir."

Mr. Stuart sits in his office, leaning back in an old ricketty chair, hat on, feet resting on the sill of an open window, cigar in mouth, evidently enjoying himself. He takes the letter. John retires.

"H'm! a drop letter. Don't know the hand. It isn't Jones'; some bill probably that I have forgotten."

He tears it open, and reads it twice through before he seems to comprehend. Then he absently folds it up, looking out of the window into the delightful regions one commonly sees at the back of offices.

"H'm! a widow!—young!—pretty!—rich!—make her happy! H'm! h'm! nonsense!—some catch! I'll not give it another thought!"

Nevertheless he deposits the letter carefully in his pocket, and devotes himself anew to his cigar. Visions of bewitching widows, of pleasant faces in his lonely old house, of little white hands resting in his, of soft arms around his neck, of——

Here he rises, buttons up his coat, gives a passing glance into the little cracked glass, which has not reflected his visage before for years, takes down his cane, and starts for home. He walks briskly up the street, until he nears a pretty brown cottage, when he slackens his pace, his knees tremble, and he feels queer about the heart.

"Nonsense!" he mutters. "What do I care who lives here? As if I didn't know that was a hoax! Doubtless I shall see a pack of brats around this house!"

But he saw none of these much-abused individuals. On the contrary, as he approached a little figure came out of the door. He did not look at her—he only saw that her dress was black. She passed down to the gate. She was going out. As she shut the gate the fringe of her mantilla caught on a nail. In vain the little fingers tugged and pulled; the obstinate fringe would not come off.

"Oh, dear!" she softly sighed, as Mr. Stuart was about to pass her; "what shall I do?"

"Shall I assist you, madam?"

Mr. Stuart was a bachelor, and could not help assisting any lady in distress, widow or maid.

"Oh, thank you! if you would be so kind," replies a soft little voice. He removes his gloves, and tries to untangle the silk, but surely never was fringe so obstinate—it was some minutes before he had it off. She tries to help. Her plump, white hand just touches his, and what a thrill it gives him! At last the tangle is fairly undone, the mantilla is free, and he looks up. He sees soft fair curls, melting blue eyes, and as he looks a blush mantles her cheek.

"Oh, thank you! I don't think I could ever have unfastened it myself," and she is gone.

Mr. Stuart walks slowly home in a reverie.

Those blue eyes have evidently had a bad effect on him. He never was so restless; nothing suits him; his evening paper is dull; his cigars are poor; his house looks dreary and uncomfortable. Blue eyes and fairy curls, rosy lips and little hands, dance merrily before his eyes. At eight o'clock he growls himself off to bed, and tumbles and tosses all night.

ACT THIRD.

Two months have passed away, dear reader, since the important letter was written. From stopping to say a word to her at the gate as he passed, to dropping in occasionally, Mr. Stewart has finally got to spending every evening at the cottage.

Mrs. Vernon sits alone, one cool evening, early in the fall. A cozy little fire in the grate dances and flickers cheerfully, brightening up the room and her little figure. She is so absorbed by her thoughts that she evidently does not hear Mr. Stuart's steps on the gravel, nor his low knock, nor his familiar opening of the door, and closing it after him; and when he stands suddenly beside her, she looks up startled, and he sees tears in her soft eyes. She quickly dashes them away, and welcomes him in the quiet way he likes. He sinks into a chair; and says he has a headache.

"O! I know how bad that is; let me bathe it for you."

He will not put her to the trouble, but she insists, and finally he lays his head back, while she brings out the cologne, and with her own little hands gently rubs it on his head.

Her air is subdued this evening; she says little, but softly flutters around him; now this side, now that, she cannot reach both sides of his head from one side of him.

Now her soft hand rests gently on his forehead; now one long fair curl brushes his cheek, as she leans over to reach the other side; now the soft folds of her dress fall over him; now she stands quite still, her tempting little waist within an inch of his arm, her round arm before his face, so near his lips.

He is an old bachelor, to be sure, and unused to ladies; but he is only mortal. An irresistible impulse seizes him, he stops not to consider, indeed, he cannot consider; he suddenly encircles the waist with his arm.

She does not draw away, but the blue eyes, opened wide with surprise, look into his.

"Oh! Mr. Stuart! you don't mean to insult me!" and tears, genuine tears, came into the soft eyes.

"Insult you! no indeed! I mean to—marry you, you witch!" And then the other strong arm passed round her, and—she does not struggle—and—passionate kisses are pressed on her lips—and—and—

Well I think he was fairly caught.

ACT FOURTH.

It is the evening before the wedding. Mr. Stuart sits in his favorite seat at the cottage, the picture of happiness. Cora has robed herself in the flowing white lace, prepared for the morrow's bride; a few white rosebuds from his last boquet adorn her hair.

This is a private rehearsal for his benefit; that *he* may see in advance what all the world will see to-morrow. Poor Mr. Stuart has never seen her in full dress, and the dazzling vision quite overcomes him; and when the snowy, fluttering phantom comes nearer, and the white arms encircle his neck, he is in the most amiable mood he ever will be.

So thinks the little lady. She has not taken all this pains to dress without a certain object; and now, seeing him so bewildered, she begins thus: standing by his side, leaning on the back of his chair.

"I've got a confession to make to-night. I couldn-t marry you, dear Joe, without telling you that I have—been naughty!"

He looks up in surprise, tears are in her eyes, her lip quivers, her form trembles.

"Darling! what is it? Don't cry—tell me?"

He put his arm assuringly around her.

"You're sure you'll forgive me, Joe, and not be—be—angry with me, for you know," putting her arm coaxingly around his neck, "you know I have no one in the world but you, and if you were angry I think I should die."

"Angry—nonsense! as if I could be angry with my little wife."

The confession was here interrupted by caresses; finally she spoke again:

"I haven't told you yet."

"Sure enough! go on now, Cora."

"Well, some time ago, I fell in love with a certain gentleman who used to pass my house every day."

"Who?" he started up, but the soft arms held him back.

"Who could it be—but *you*, dear Joe?"

"Oh!—go on, dearest."

"Well, I couldn't get acquainted with him, so I—I—" she stopped, trembled and blushed.

"What did you do?" he whispers. "Tell me. I will forgive because of the *motive*."

"I—wrote—an—an—anonymous letter."

"To *me*?"

"To you, dearest Joe; will you forgive?"

How could he be angry, with the tear-dimmed eyes looking fondly into his; with the soft curls brushing his brow; with the grieved lips within a few inches of his.

He did—what you would have done, dear bachelor reader—he charmed away the tears, soothed the trembling little heart; and thought he was the happiest dog on earth.

ACT FIFTH.

The last act of our drama shall be two years after the happy day that saw our plotting widow united to her rich husband.

Scene.—A cosy tea-table in Mr. Stuart's house. Mr. Stuart sitting opposite his blooming wife, contentedly sipping his tea.

"Hm, wife," he says, "I was looking over old papers to-day, and came across that—shall I save it for a warning to little Alfred?"—throwing her a letter.

She opened it, blushed, laughed, and, jumping up, threw it into the open grate.

Mr. Stuart rose from his tea, and came and stood by her.

She turned to him:

"Are you sorry, husband? Did I do wrong?"

He actually—I'm ashamed to confess it, dear reader, for they had been so long married—but he actually did, then and there, embrace her.

"Sorry? Haven't I got the nicest little wife and baby in this city—or any other? Haven't you made me happy as a lord, you witch you! ever since I brought you here? Sorry indeed! Don't you dare to mention it again! It was the best thing you ever did—except becoming Mrs. Stuart."

WIT is not the produce of study; it comes almost as unexpectedly on the speaker as the hearer. One of the first principles of it is good temper. The arrows of wit ought always to be feathered with smiles; when they fail in that they become sarcasms.

THE follies of youth become the vices of manhood and the disgrace of old age.

OUR OWN SPHINX.

[Communications intended for publication in this department, should be addressed to care of Editor SATURDAY EVENING POST, Philada.]

ENIGMAS.

1.

I am composed of 35 letters—

My 14, 25, 9, 33, 18 is a noted character in one of Shakespeare's plays.

My 26, 3, 20, 29, 17, 7 was a noted reformer.

My3 4, 27, 31, 4, 17 is a river in France.

My 13, 8, 15, 16, 15 is a West India fruit.

My 1, 11, 33, 15, 20 produces one of the necessities of live.

My 18, 32, 22, 10, 29, 12 was a German poet.

My 15, 2, 4, 18 is a river in Italy.

My 1, 15, 35, 21, 31, 28, 5, 24, 8, 4 was a very great and good man.

My 21, 3, 9, 12 was a famous historian.

My 10, 19, 30, 4, 24, 8, 28 are celebrated falls in New York State.

My 23, 15, 10, 3, 19, 28 is a planet.

My 26, 8, 4, 13, 6, 30, 26, 28, 18, 1 is one of our best poets.

My whole is the last and best production of a celebrated author. NANCY.

2.

I am composed of 44 letters.

My 1, 12, 3, 37, 10, 39 is a city in New Jersey.

My 2, 16, 19, 20, 30 was a celebrated poet.

My 4, 12, 37, 13, 25, 39, 42, 8 was a noted battle-field.

My 5, 12, 34, 17, 27, 37, 31 is a country in Europe.

My 6, 32, 37, 39, 33, 9, 36, 12, 37 was the *nom de plume* of a celebrated writer.

My 11, 41, 27, 26 is a species of tree!

My 14, 18, 12, 10, 37 is a lake in North America.

My 15, 3, 30, 43, 23 is a measurement of land.

My 22, 38, 40 is a species of fruit.

My 24, 29, 28 is a habitation.

My 35, 20, 26, 44 is an article of clothing.

My whole bids fair to surpass all its predecessors. GAHMER.

CHARADES.

1.

My first is a preposition,
My next's not intended to warm ye;
My third is a motto for youth,
And my whole is part of the army.
GAHMER.

2.

My first is a kind of grain.
My second is a fish.
My third is an organ of the body.
My fourth is a girl's name.
My whole is a valuable stone. S.H.G.

WORD SQUARE.

1. An ingredient of beer.
2. An ancient god.
3. A city in Europe.
4. To break quickly. GAHMER.

DOUBLE REBUS.

1. A very pleasant time of year,
2. An author's name you often hear;
3. A noted place in Holy Writ,
4. An ancient city, noted yet.
5. One who gives his life away,
6. The land in which you live to-day,
7. And a famous town in Africa.

The initials will name a famous man,
The finals his rank, now guess who can!
GAHMER.

BURIED TOWNS AND RIVERS.

1. My picture is hanging in the best room.
2. What is the value of an ounce of gold in dust?
3. There is your pencil lying on the table.
4. Is the air raw? add your clothing for comfort.
5. Is the study of language no adjunct to man?
6. The musician had a splendid toned bugle.
7. The shrimp is a small fish.
8. The POST is a first-class paper.
9. The children of Israel fled from Egypt.
10. Lindley Murray was a celebrated grammarian.
11. Barnum has a curious beast on exhibition.
12. Blackstone made law a recreation.
GAHMER.

RIDDLE.

My first is in robber, but not in thief.
My second is in happiness, also in grief.
My third is in damp, but not in wet.
My fourth is in credit, also in debt.
My fifth is in gloomy, but not in drear.
My sixth is in cheap, also in dear.
My whole is sometimes very queer.

MATHEMATICAL PUZZLE.

Fifty set down, it matters much which way,
And naught to it add without delay,
And five unto the naught placed at the right hand;
That all in one perfect line may stand,
Then each in four equal parts divide,
And place the first fourth by the side.
The sum thus worked, if rightly done,
Will prove what tempts men risk to run.

Answers to "Our Own Sphinx." No. 5, Vol. 54.

ENIGMAS.—1. A bitter word. 2. Braces—a pair of braces. A brace of birds. 3. Letter-carrier.

CONUNDRUMS.—1. When his case augurs well. 2. Whis-key. 3. Because he often has to-back-her. 4. The tiller. 5. Because you're teasing it (tea's in it.) 6. Her chin (urchin.) 7. Bacon. 8. Letter B (let her be).

CHARADE.—Pipkin.

EASY CHARADES.—1. Shamrock. 2. Shylock. 3. Dewdrop.

REVERSIBLE WORDS.—Pins, snip; lever, revel; repel, leper; massa, assam; lara, aral; reward, drawer.

SWIFT'S LOVE SONG.—
Moll is a beauty;
Has an acute eye;
No lass so fine is;
Oh, my dear mistress,
Can't you discover me as a lover?

LOGOGRIPH.—
If Bright were of his head bereft,
You then must own *right* would be left.

[From this week's number we shall discontinue giving the answers to the enigmas, charades, etc., that appear in this column each week, in the following week's issue. We have received several letters from old and valued contributors to this department, suggesting that as the solving of these enigmas, charades, etc., is one of the most developing exercises for the youthful mind, as well as affording a fund of amusement for the evenings now so rapidly lengthening, we should give time for all who may feel so inclined, to puzzle over them. We shall, therefore, for the future, allow three weeks to elapse, during which time we shall be pleased to hear from any of our friends.]

FACETIÆ

ENGAGED for every *set*—A hen.

BRANCH establishments—Trees.

A CREMATIONIST.—Cinder-Ella.

"How can we part?" as the barber said to his bald-headed customer.

THE sentinel who did not sleep on his watch had left it at the pawnbroker's.

WHY is grass like a penknife?—Because the *spring* brings out the *blades*.

SOWING AND REAPING.—When a young lady hems handkerchiefs for a rich bachelor, she probably *sews* that she may reap.

SOMETIMES.—"A kind word spoken to a husband will go further than a broomstick or a flirtation," says a woman of experience.

POOR THING.—"What is home without a mother?" is what a young lady remarked the other day, when her ma left her the ironing to do.

RETRENCHMENT.—Beau Brummel, finding himself in pecuniary straits, at once admitted the necessity for retrenchment. "Ah, I see," he said, "I must reduce the rosewater in my bath."

A LIKENESS.—A country physician has had his portrait painted, and a local art critic declares that you can feel saws and things rasping over your bones, and taste calomel, blue pill, and quinine, as you look at it.

A LECTURER on optics, in explaining the mechanism of the organ of vision, remarked: "Let any man gaze closely into his wife's eye, and he will see himself looking so exceedingly small"——here the lecturer's voice was drowned by shouts and laughter and applause which greeted his scientific remark.

MAN AND THE WEATHER.

Man's a fool!
When it's hot he wants its cool;
When it's cold he wants it hot;
Ne'er contented with his lot.
When it's dry,
He for showers is heard to sigh;
When—to meet his wish—it rains
Of the wet the fool complains.
Hot or cold, dry or wet,
Nothing suits that he can get;
I consider, as a rule,
Man's a fool.

SOME foreign journals tell stories occasionally which are very hard to swallow. The *Journal des Debats* says: "A curious deputation waited upon his holiness the Pope, the other day, to congratulate him on his attainment of his eighty-third year. The deputation consisted of eighty-three maidens, ranging from one year old to fourscore and three." The idea of any maidens confessing themselves to be in the thirties or forties, or even fifties. Believe it who may, we do not.

PROBABILITIES.—"Old Prob." is not to be held responsible for the following society probabilities:

When you see a man going home at two o'clock in the morning, and knows his wife is waiting for him, it is likely to be stormy.

When a man receives a bill of goods his wife has bought unknown to him, look out for thunder and lightning.

When a man goes home and finds no supper ready, the fire out and his wife visiting, it is likely to be cloudy.

When a man promises to take his wife to a party, and changes his mind after she is dressed, you may expect a shower.

When a man saves his cigar money to buy his wife a new bonnet and the children new shoes, it indicates a spell of sunshine.

When a man dies and leaves a nice young widow, with plenty of money, and you see her walking out with the executor on Sunday afternoon, a change is imminent.

BABY LETTER.—The following letter, purporting to be from a very promising sprig of the rising generation just three weeks old, has been handed to us, with the assurance that it is genuine as well as good, which we do not presume to doubt. If any one has a smarter baby, let it be exhibited:

Dear old uncle,
I dot oor letter,
My old mammy
She ditten better;
She every day
Little bit stronger,
Don'tmean to be sick
Very much longer.
Daddy's so fat
Can't hardly stagger;
Mammy says he jloks
Too much lager!
Dear little baby
Had a bad colic,
Had to take tree drops
Nassy paregolic.
Toot a dose of tatnip,
Felt worse as ever;
Shan't take no more
Tatnip never!
Wind on stomit,
Felt pooty bad!
Worse fit of sickness
Ever I had?
Ever had belly ate,
Old Uncle Bill?
Taint no fun now,
Say what oo will.
I used to sleep all day,
And cry all night:
Don't do it now,
Cause taint yite.

But I'm growing,
Getting poorty fat,
Gain most two pounds,
Only tink o yat!
Little femmin blankets
Was too big before,
Nurse can't pin me
In em no more.
Skirts so small,
Baby so stout,
Had to let the plaits
In em all out.
Got a head of hair
Jess as black as night,
And big boo eyes
Yat look mighty bright
My mammy say
Never did see
Any ozzer baby
Half as sweet as me.
Grandma comes often,
Aunt Sarah too;
Baby loves zem,
Baby loves oo.
Baby sends a pooty kiss
To his uncles all,
Aunties and cousins,
Big folks and small.
Can't yite no more,
So good-bye,
Bully old uncle,
Viz a glass eye!

TOO GOOD A JOKE.—It rained—hopelessly. The clouds came down in sheets and sluices. Monsieur de H——, an elegant "of the first water," found this second water too wet for him. He was islanded under another man's portico, and not a public vehicle near. Suddenly round the corner comes a plain citizen, housed under a protecting canopy of blue cotton and whalebone; but, under this enviable umbrella, walking alone. A thought seizes Monsieur de H——. He rushes to the citizen's side, and seizing him affectionately by the arm, commences the eager narration of a touching train of events. Not giving his astonished listener time to respond, he hurries him along, sharing his umbrella, of course, as he goes, and clinging closely to his side, and vociferating the confidential communications till they arrive at the *boulevard*. He stops at a *cafe*, and then, for the first time apparently, takes a surprised look at the face of his umbrella lender. Overwhelming apologies—had wholly mistaken the person—thought it was his most intimate friend, begs ten thousand pardons, and dodges into the inside of a coffee-house. But the fun was to be in the telling of a story. To a convulsed circle of delighted fellow dandies Monsieur de H——, was telling of his adventure, when, by chance, placing his hand upon his heart, he missed the usual protuberance in his vest pocket. The valuable gold watch was gone. In his close clinging to the apparently plain citizen the gay joker had hugged a pickpocket, and "consequence was" subsequently not fond of this joke.

THE OLD, OLD STORY.

BY D. C.

Daintily over the dew-wet grass
Tripped blue-eyed Milly, the farmer's lass,
Swinging her milk pail to and fro,
As she murmured a love-song, soft and low.
Many a suitor Milly had,
From the Squire's son to the herdsman's lad;
But she smiled on all with a merry glance,
And gave each wooer an equal chance.

Now, faithful Donald, the herdsman's lad,
The more he loved her the more was sad;
"For what with the Squire's son," thought he,
"She never will turn a thought to me!"
But down in the meadow he raked the hay,
When Milly went sighing along that way.
He watched her pass, and she cried, in jest:
"'Tis the early bird"—you know the rest!"

Then suddenly Donald grew so bold
That the "old, old story" was quickly told;
And blue-eyed Milly was nothing loth
On that summer's morning to plight her troth.
"Oh, foolish Donald!" she cried in glee,
"To wait so long for a hint from me!"
Then merrily over the dew-wet grass
Tripped Donald and Milly, his own sweet lass.

THE EBONY CASKET;

OR,

The Raymond Inheritance.

BY RETT WINWOOD.

[This serial was commenced in No. 46. Back numbers can be obtained from all newsdealers throughout the United States, or direct from this office.]

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LAST EFFORT.

Bernice's swoon did not last many seconds. When consciousness returned Philip Layton was supporting her in a chair, and deluging her face and temples with cold water.

"How silly of you to faint at such a time," said he, in his light, airy way. "But I suppose you could not help it. Women are all alike, forever doing the very thing that should be avoided."

She looked up into his face, forcing a faint smile to her lips. Words and manner both jarred upon her sensitive nature, but she was too glad to have him there to let him know it.

"Oh, Jasper," she murmured, "I should have died if you'd kept away from me. I am not strong—I couldn't have held out forever."

He winced a little at the sound of his brother's name—the brother who had been so kind to him, but whom he was wronging so bitterly—winced and frowned as he replied:

"I'm glad you did hold out, my dear. You might have known I'd come, sooner or later."

"I was not sure you would ever forgive me because—because"—blushing rosy red all over her lovely face, "I did not meet you that night when we were to have been married."

Philip had the grace to look embarrassed.

"Humph. I waited for you until after midnight," he said, glibly. "When you did not come, I soon made up my mind that our little plot had been discovered, and you were detained against your will."

"It was worse than that," she cried, wringing her hands wildly. "Oh, I have been most foully dealt with."

He shrugged, impatiently.

"I'll hear the whole story another time, my dear. Now it is best we should get out of this as quickly as possible."

"How did you find me?"

The villain hesitated and stammered, feeling her searching gaze upon his face.

"I—I—bribed one of the servants."

"He gave you the key?"

"Yes."

Bernice drew a long breath, and after a moment's thinking, said:

"This is Shrublands?"

"It is."

"We are in the east wing?"

"Yes; at the top of the house."

He was shifting uneasily, and every now and then glancing towards the door. Evidently, he did not relish being questioned. Nor did he like the look she bent upon him. Something dark of distrust and fear was creeping into it.

"If I waste a moment here," he thought, "the game will be up, and Dora and that old sneak, Raymond, may whistle for all the good I'll do them by assuming my brother's identity."

This was the plan these wretches had finally concocted—to induce Bernice to give up the ebony casket to Philip, under the impression it was Jasper to whom she was entrusting it. Once having this at their disposal, they could place the girl at defiance.

"Oh, Jasper," she cried, suddenly, "why do you glare at me in that way? You look white and frightened. Why is it?"

"It's enough to frighten anybody, to be lingering in this ghastly place," he answered, almost sharply. "Come, my dear. Let's be off."

Again she bent a keen glance upon his face. She was trembling violently. Was this queer-spoken, not too polite fellow the gentlemanly Jasper she had known and loved so well? What a strange transformation!

With her fingers clasped over her temples, she said:

"Where will you go?"

"Anywhere, to be rid of this cursed place. But, first of all, we must secure the ebony casket of which you told me once upon a time. Where have you hidden it?"

She stared at him wildly. How did he know she had hidden it at all?

She put the question into words. It caused Philip to color, and bite his lip; for he saw that he had been too precipitate.

"Never mind how I knew it," he answered, insolently. And then, warned by the shrinking gesture she gave, he added, in a wheedling tone:

"I hope you are not going to distress me, Bernice, when I've risked so much to find you? Where is the casket? Is it hidden in the house?"

"No," she said, faintly.

"In the grounds?"

For answer, she drew back suddenly against the wall, with both hands flying in the air, as if she would fain beat him off.

Philip was at a loss. He took a step nearer, and said softly, after a pause:

"You poor, silly dove. Why are you frightened? You know that I love you, that my love will shield all your future. Come, the way is clear. Let us leave this house together, and find the casket."

He held out his hand. She struck it violently from her, and turning, as if to fly, cried with a shrill scream:

"You are an impostor; you are not Jasper; no, no, no! He would not have spoken like that! Leave me. I won't go with you; I won't tell you where the casket is hidden!"

Then, the scales fallen from her eyes, too weak to fly, or stand, she sunk into a chair and burst into a flood of hysterical tears.

This sudden outbreak brought Philip to a stand still. He knew not what to do, and so stood staring at her sullenly, and muttering some very fearful curses under his breath.

And while this state of affairs lasted, the door was suddenly pushed open and Giles Raymond, his wife, Captain Marthe and Dora burst into the room.

They had followed Philip to the east wing that they might witness the result of his stratagem; but they had intended to keep in the background until this sudden frenzy of Bernice's compelled them to put in an appearance.

Mr. Raymond's face was fiendish in its expression. A livid pallor had settled all over it. His eyes burned deep in his head, like two coals of fire.

"The fool!" he screamed. "Thedd—d fool!" and he swore some very hard words. "She is bent on ruining us. But we'll see who wields the power in this house. She shall tell us where to find that casket, or, by the heaven above, I'll murder her!"

He bounded forward, snarling with rage, and his supple fingers clutched viciously at Bernice's throat. Another moment and he would have strangled her, perhaps, so blinded and maddened was he with the passion that consumed him.

A loud outcry just beyond the door arrested his attention. Turning, but with his fingers still working nervously, he saw the real Jasper Layton and Lasalle dash into the apartment.

Bernice saw them, too. Like a flash she seemed to comprehend the situation. Panting, trembling, half dead with fright, she made a last frantic effort to shake off the deadly grasp at her throat, crying out in a strangling voice:

"Jasper, my Jasper! Oh, God be praised!"

Mr. Raymond's hands fell away of their own accord. A sudden change swept over his countenance. He flushed purple, and then grew whiter than before, if that was possible.

"Lost!" he heard some one scream at his elbow—the voice of his wife.

That word seemed to rouse him. Glaring all round, like a beast at bay, a moment—his burning eyes taking in every figure present, even to the gaunt one of Saul, who stood shrinking in the doorway—he swore a volley of the most fearful curses, in the midst of which his shaking right hand sought his breast.

Something clicked sharply. Out came his hand with a pistol in it, and the next instant a deadly rim of steel was pressed against Bernice's forehead.

"By ——," he swore, "I'll not be foiled at this late day!"

He pulled the trigger. In his agitation his finger slipped from its place and down went the hammer, making only a faint clicking sound.

With another oath, he cocked the pistol a second time. But Lasalle and Jasper were now both upon him. The former caught his right arm, turning it backward and upward with the strength of a giant.

The pistol exploded just at this moment. It was raised at an angle, pointing straight at the villain's heart. A long, shrill shriek of agony broke from Giles Raymond's lips. Lurching forward, he fell heavily into the arms extended to save him.

He was dead—unwittingly, he had taken his own life.

CHAPTER XXXI.

CONCLUSION.

It will be well to drop a veil over the wild scene of confusion that followed—Mrs. Raymond's grief, rage and remorse; Dora's penitential tears; and Captain Marthe's fear and despair, are not pleasant subjects upon which to dwell.

But the truth came out. Mrs. Raymond no longer sought to withhold it. In the awe and anguish of that dreadful moment, when she stood face to face with her dead husband—the man who had enticed her on to numberless crimes, and all for the sake of a little gold and a high position—she seemed to realize the sin and folly of so much crime, and kept back nothing.

The story she told, and the explanation we have to make (for they may as well come together) are as follows:

Bernice was really the daughter of her husband's elder brother, Paul Raymond. Paul was rich and Giles was poor. To Paul had belonged Shrublands and all the wealth by which it was kept up.

He was fond of Giles. Something induced him to make a will by which everything was to fall to his brother in case he died leaving no heirs.

There the trouble and plotting began. A terrible temptation had come in Giles' way, and he did not possess the strength to resist it. Paul's health was not good; he had been a married man, but his wife was dead; she had left him only one child, Bernice, then an infant, a poor, weak creature, whom nobody expected to live.

Paul Raymond went abroad, accompanied by Saul—or Saul Davids, for that was the real name of the man to whom the reader was introduced in the house by the river—and he will soon understand why Saul had been shut up there.

Paul Raymond died in England, some twelve months after having left his native shores. Saul was not with him at the time. He had quitted his service, married in Wales, and settled down there as dairyman.

Toward the last, Paul grew suspicious of his brother's good faith, I know not why. Sometimes the eyes of the dying are singularly opened, and it may have been so in his case. He saw at last through the pitiful varnished crust into the cruel heart beneath perhaps.

He made a new will. This, with his marriage certificate and a record of Bernice's birth—which latter papers he always carried with him—were enclosed in the ebony casket, an heirloom in the Raymond family, by the way.

He was a stranger in a strange land. He had no friend to whom he could entrust these precious documents, and he finally picked upon the woman who took care of him—Nurse Goodwin.

The selection was unfortunate, in more ways than one. Nurse Goodwin, though honest, was a woman of very little energy, no judgment, and timid beyond the average of her sex.

Paul gave her money, however, and exacted a solemn promise that she would go direct to the United States, seek out his child, and never leave her until ample justice had been done, if she were being defrauded in any manner.

Nurse Goodwin intended to comply with his instructions. She came to America, found out where little Bernice was kept, and tried to watch over her at a distance, but lacked the resolution to present herself openly.

Even her dull wit soon comprehended the thought the devil had put into Giles Raymond's head. After a little, another child was substituted for Bernice, a girl of her own age and very like her in appearance, but who was far gone in consumption.

This girl soon died, and was buried from Shrublands, with great pomp and ceremony, as Bernice Raymond.

The real Bernice, meanwhile, had been spirited away. Nurse Goodwin never lost sight of her, however, and in one particular played her cards shrewdly, for she got possession of the little orphan, who had been left in the charge of a woman named Vance in another State, and always kept her with her afterwards.

But she lacked the courage or resolution to boldly present herself at Shrublands and proclaim the truth.

Not until Bernice was grown up, and she had grown so feeble that the chord of her life was liable to snap at any moment, did she convey Bernice back to the vicinity of her old home.

Even then she might not have done so had not Saul Davids suddenly made his appearance upon the scene.

After many prosperous years Saul had met with sudden reverses. His wife died, and on her death-bed made him promise to return to America and seek out her only sister, a woman of the name of Goodwin, and tell her of her death.

The sister of Saul's wife was none other than Bernice's foster-mother—so strangely does Providence work out its ends sometimes. Saul found her without much difficulty, and during the mutual confidences that followed this first meeting the whole truth came out in regard to Bernice, who was away at school at that particular time.

Saul went to Shrublands alone. The nature of the meeting that took place between him and Giles Raymond can readily be imagined. Mr. Raymond tried large bribes, threats, everything to insure the silence of his brother's former servant. All in vain. Saul felt guilty for every having deserted his old master, and longed to make some atonement for that wrong.

Giles Raymond saw ruin, exposure staring him in the face. He treacherously waylaid Saul, and had him shut up in the house by the river, in the care of the man Bill and his amiable mother.

Nurse Goodwin waited long for her brother-in-law's return. But he did not come. Finally, she recalled Bernice from the school in which she had been placed, and took up her abode near Shrublands.

To Bernice she told very little. She did not once mention Saul's name, however. I cannot account for her reticence in this particular unless she feared to alarm the girl.

Anxiety and distress took her off very suddenly. But she wrote out all the particulars I have just been describing before her death, and added the paper to those already in the casket.

Her only reason for exacting the promise from Bernice not to open the casket for a certain number of months, seems to have been the feeling that it would be safer for the latter, as she would then be of age, and, in consequence, less trammeled and safer from persecution.

She had merely given Bernice to understand vaguely, that she was in some way related to the Raymonds, warning her against them in a very indefinite manner.

After the old woman's death, Bernice had gone directly to Shrublands. The Raymonds received her coolly, but did not refuse her an asylum. After a time, the plan suggested itself of marrying her to Captain Marthe.

Their interest in this marriage, can readily be explained. Captain Marthe was really their illegitimate son, born while Giles Raymond was sowing his wild oats, soon after his college career.

If Bernice could once be persuaded to marry him, they could set discovery and exposure at defiance.

They knew, from Bernice, of the existence of the casket, and could guess what were its contents. But while she was at Shrublands, the first time, no attempt was made to deprive her of it.

Her sudden flight, when she had endured as long as human nature could bear it, the persecutions of Captain Marthe, and the coldness of the other members of the family, soon put a new aspect upon affairs.

Of course it became necessary to get possession of the casket as soon as possible. Hence the advertisement Jasper Layton had seen in the columns of the Herald—and hence the abduction from Millbrook.

As for Patty Glint, she was really the woman Vance, under another name.

But the miserable plot, the long fraud, had failed at last, and Bernice's wrongs were righted.

What shall I say of her? Of course it did not take long for her and Jasper to come to an understanding after the events of that memorable night. She has been his wife now nearly two years, and no two people could be happier.

Jasper forgave his brother Philip all the wrong he had done him—though not very readily. But he felt like making one last effort to save him from a wicked life, and it proved more successful than former ones. He gave him money to establish a respectable business in San Francisco.

Brother Philip went, glad to get off so easily. Dora accompanied him. She was lawfully his wife, and still had honor enough left to cling to him. It is scarcely probable though, that Jasper and Bernice will ever look upon their two faces again.

It is said that Mrs. Raymond and Captain Marthe followed them to the Golden State. We cannot vouch for the truth of the story. We only know that they disappeared suddenly from the vicinity of Shrublands, and have not since been seen in that neighborhood.

It is well. They should not be left, like troubled spirits, to haunt the scenes of their former crimes. We leave them in God's hands—to his infinite mercy.

Lasalle was one of the guests at Bernice's wedding, and he has been a warm true friend to the young couple in their new relations. If there are any pangs at his heart, he hides them, and makes no sign.

Saul Davids has a home and a welcome at Shrublands, certain to be his till the end of his days.

And so, leaving the good people at peace, we kiss our hand to the the reader and say good-bye.

THE END.

KNOW BEFORE YOU SPEAK.

BY C. P. S.

Among the petty dishonesties of common life, there are some more hurtful, but perhaps none more paltry than that of pretending to know where one is ignorant. It is a fault into which many not ill-meaning persons are drawn, from a false shame which would probably be checked if any immediate evil consequences seemed likely to flow from it. They dislike to appear at a loss, or under a short-coming, about anything, and thus are tempted either to affect knowledge where they have it not, or in some way to allow it to be supposed that they are not ignorant.

When any rational and well-meaning person feels himself tempted into such courses, let him only consider how absurd it is to suppose that there can be any real disgrace in being ignorant of any particular fact whatever. Science is a vast field—so is learning—insomuch that there can be no man in existence acquainted with the whole of either. The most eminent in both scientific knowledge and in learning know only a part, and are liable to be found ignorant of much. When, therefore, any ordinary person is found acquainted with some particular fact, or even with some entire science, or some whole language, there is no reason why he should be deemed a generally ignorant man, for it may be presumed that, if he is ignorant of one thing, he is conversant with another.

There is a story of the celebrated Sheridan having once apparently quoted a passage from a Greek poet in the House of Commons, when in reality he only uttered a gabble resembling Greek. An honorable gentleman, who spoke after him, fully assented to the application of the passage to the case in question. How ineffably ridiculous must that man have appeared when Sheridan disclosed the trick! This is a dishonor to which every one is exposed who in any way, however slight or negative, affects to appear knowing where he is ignorant.

THE fact must be learned, sooner or later, that it is an utter impossibility to oblige every one. No matter how a person chooses to conduct himself, he will find that his conduct will not meet the approbation of all who are cognizant of his actions. The temperaments of men are so variously constructed that no particular disposition will be acceptable to all. The practice of a certain set of virtues will find admirers in a portion of mankind, while another and large portion will be antagonistic or indifferent. More than half of the world cannot be pleased with a particular line of conduct, for all experience has indisputably demonstrated and confirmed the fact.

SATURDAY EVENING POST.—This sterling weekly, the oldest literary paper published in this country, is constantly growing in favor. It recently passed into the hands of R. J. C. Walker, one of the most promising young lawyers at the Philadelphia bar, and a gentleman of fine literary ability, who is sparing no pains to make it the ablest and most interesting paper in the country. Its ample pages are filled with serial stories of the highest order, poetry, and other interesting reading matter. No family in the country should be without it.—From Texas *Iron Age*, Marshall, Texas.

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The Boudoir
FASHION NOTES & QUERIES

[Communications relating exclusively to subjects considered in this department, in order to receive prompt attention, should be addressed to "Fashion Editress" SATURDAY EVENING POST.]

The fiery "Dog Star" now asserts his might, and we realize the full meaning of "sultry August weather," in these last weeks of summer. It is all the more unendurable, since the cool mornings and evenings of the last weeks of July and the first of August, when extra cargoes of blankets had to be shipped to the sea-side resorts; and winter shawls and wraps resurrected from the depths of the camphor-chests, where only a few short weeks before they had been carefully packed with the expectancy of reappearing only with the "first frost."

The air is full of prophetic rumors concerning the oncoming "season." Already have models for hats and bonnets for autumn arrived from over the "dark blue sea."

Of such as we have seen we will not now enter into special detail, merely give a general idea of the new styles.

As we have notified our readers from time to time, the fiat concerning elevated coiffures has certainly gone forth, and the shape of the bonnet must be in accordance with the altered outline of the head. One of the new bonnets is described as being of a "scoop shape." We can readily conceive the impossibility of a "scoop" accommodating itself to the masses of puffs and braids which have hitherto heaped the heads of our belles. The reason why the return to the low-drooping chatelaine braid, now considered "the style" abroad, has not been so universally adopted on this side of the water is, we think, due in a measure to our sturdy American independence. That is, the change came too suddenly, and after the arrangements of summer costumes had been made, for it to recommend itself as desirable. Also, it is an inappropriate style for warm weather.

Considering the damage likely to be done to dainty fraises of lace, by the entanglement thereof, with the low-drooping braids, and the distressing amount of crushing likely to accrue to the delicate ruches of crepe lisse, so universally worn and admired, our belles continue to elevate their puffs and curls, and so combine comfort with economy until next season.

The fancy for trimming with ostrich tips and plumes, which truly has run riot for the past two or three seasons, is over.

Clusters of bright and artistically shaded game feathers, aigrettes of heron's plumes, and wings of gaudily colored tropical birds, are to be the trimming for the fall and winter. Indeed, the entire birds with head a little drooped, and wings outspread, will be used as an ornament for the side and front of the hat. Satin is being revived as a trimming.

Concerning flowers, there are some rather startling combinations in point of color threatened, which, at the risk of being denounced as heretical, since these colors are approved of in Paris, we ardently trust may *not* be adopted generally here. Such, for instance, as roses with *purple* or *blue* petals, and gray and pink calyxes or cups — forget-me-nots done in white velvet, with pink centres. Why, of all things, should our neighbors across the "pond" assail this darling of the poets through all the ages, and rob her of her traditional blue? Much scarlet will appear in the coloring of flowers and leaves.

Among the novelties are ornaments and embroideries of blue and gray steel. The ornaments, such as coronets for bonnet fronts and the brim, or aigrettes for the same purpose, are made over stiff black net, covered with small spangles and beads of the blue or gray steel. The embroidery is done with the beads only, and these in connection with a woolen thread of the same shade.

Among the costumes for September we have seen one which pleased us so well, that we shall describe it minutely. It was composed of two shades of fine cashmere—elephant gray and a dark shade bordering upon a slate. The back breadths were of the dark, and simply laid in perpendicular pleats of an inch and a half in width, not plastered at the bottom, after the usual style of kilt-pleating, but allowed to hang loose, thereby giving a more easy and graceful sweep to the skirt. The upper part of the front, and the entire part of the two side widths were of the light or elephant gray, and were embroidered in a pattern of running vines and leaves, into here and there a small cluster of grapes, done in two shades of gray silk, and interspersed with blue steel beads. The front breadth was in two parts, the upper of the light, and embroidered to match the sides. This tablier extended about half way down, where it was met by a pleating of the dark, arranged similarly with the back breadths. The line of meeting was covered with a fringe of knotted silk mingled with the blue steel beads, which continued up the sides, defining the tablier or apron shape, and ended under the basque.

The basque itself was of the cuirass or close-fitting shape, and made with sleeves of the dark shade, laid in three pleats turning outward, the last reaching the outer seam. These are confined a few inches below the elbow by a band of the light, embroidered, and from thence fall open over the wrist. The neck is finished with a round standing collar of the light, lined with the dark, which slopes easily off into revers as it reaches the bust. These latter are turned back to show the dark lining; buttons of blue steel finish the corsage.

White muslin dresses, so much worn this past season, will be continued on through fall and winter for evening wear, in the form of overdresses, and will be very tastefully combined with rich, dark silk underskirts. One, we noticed, so graceful and yet so simple, that any lady of taste could get it up at home, with but little cost or trouble. We will briefly describe:

The overskirt was plain, with back and side breadths longer than the front, and trimmed with a single flounce beaded by a puffing and small standing ruffle; front, apron shaped, trimmed with puffs, put on diagonally from right to left, finished at the bottom by a flounce. Waist, high, and simply the old Garibaldi shape, ending in a standing ruche, edged with narrow lace. Sleeves full and confined in puffs from the shoulder to the waist by bands of ribbon which ended in bows. Sash to match sleeve ribbons, and worn scarf fashion, across the right shoulder, tying in a loose knot just back of the left hip.

Small mantles, Dolman and Medicis shape, sacques and fichus with hoods, will be worn for autumn wraps.

Aumonieres of black velvet beaded in jet, and blue velvet, beaded in blue steel are among the novelties.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MISS H. J.—The cuirass basque is the latest style of waist, as you will see by reference to the "Houdoir" for this number. It is simply the old tight fitting basque, with what is termed the French back; no "side bodies."

"COUNTRY LASS."—We think your idea concerning the black silk is very wise, and prophesying quietly as you do, it will be the most appropriate and suitable thing you can get for a "test suit;" and you can always brighten it with gay neckties, tasteful laces, etc. Twenty-two yards will make a suit for you, as you are short and slender. Get the best, it will be cheapest in the end.

"MOTHER."—Certainly, make up the dear little dresses of blue and pink checked silk, for "Bessie and Mamie." Put two or three flounces on the back breadths, and narrow frills up the front. Make overdresses of fine Swiss, or French muslin, trimmed with frills of same, or embroidery; slashed to match the color of the silk, and your little darlings will blossom out like twin flowers.

And now, *au revoir* for the present,

NINON.

THE MOUNTAINEER.

BY EDWARD S. ELLIS.

In the spring of 1845 an emigrant train set out from Independence, Missouri, for Oregon. This was a great undertaking at that recent day. There were hundreds of miles to be traversed, fierce storms to be encountered, and numerous savages to be passed ere the destination could be reached.

The company numbered about a hundred, of whom nearly one-half were men. Among the latter were comprehended several hunters, who accompanied the expedition in the capacity of guides. One of these was that renowned mountaineer Kit Carson, then a young man, but whose daring exploits had already won him a fame throughout the far West. His companions, although much his seniors, all looked upon him as their leading spirit, and instinctively gave way to him in every emergency.

The company followed the overland trail, leading along the bank of the Platte, clear to its source in the Black Hills, and with such guides and stout hearts had little fear. For the first day or two their journey led them through the country of the friendly Delawares and Wyandots, where they were subjected only to the loss of a few of their possessions, through the pilfering propensities of the savages.

Finally, they entered upon the broad ocean of prairie, where the only human beings they saw besides themselves were a few straggling Indians in the distance. Now and then vast herds of buffalo crossed their path, and innumerable droves of horses thundered over the plains at sight of such unwelcome visitors.

These sights, as might be expected, occasioned much wonder to the emigrants, but were unheeded by the guides. Carson generally rode a short distance in advance of the train, his watchful eye constantly sweeping over the horizon for "sign," and his soul alive to the responsibility which rested upon him. When fairly within dangerous territory he never failed to exercise the most extreme caution. Every night the sentinels were set and as much preparation made as though an attack were certain before morning.

One night, when far upon their journey, they struck their camp upon a small stream, which had its rise near the source of the Columbia. A cold, dismal storm set in during the afternoon, rendering the traveling exceedingly tedious and difficult. The rain poured down incessantly, the ground became soft and spongy, and darkness coming on early, they halted sooner than was their custom. Thus far they had been remarkably fortunate, for not a hostile demonstration had been made by Indians. As might be expected, an undue sense of security came over them. They believed the savages were intimidated by their superior strength and numbers, and would be sure not to molest them as long as they remained together. Upon the night in question they kindled their camp fires, gathered merrily around them, and determined in spite of the cold, dismal rain, to make a pleasant time of it.

Shortly after these preparations had been completed, Kit Carson called a young man aside.

"Strikes me," said he, in an undertone, "you're going it *rather* high, ain't you?"

"Oh! I don't know as we are, Kit. You see what a horrid night it is, and there is no harm, is there, in making ourselves as comfortable as possible?"

"No; don't know as there is. But what about the redskins? I've concluded to put an extra force on to-night to keep watch."

"Of course I am perfectly willing to bear my part, but it does strike me, friend Carson, that you are too apprehensive of danger."

"Shouldn't wonder now if you did think so; but you, 'sposen I tell you there's going to be some *tall times* in these parts before morning."

"What do you mean?" asked the man, in tones of alarm.

"Oh! nothin', only if you want to save your ha'r you've got to fight for it."

Carson soon explained that he, in conjunction with his brother hunters, had detected unmistakable "sign" of Indians. They had appeared in sight during the day, and especially in the afternoon their actions had been such as to leave no doubt of their intentions. Favored by the inky darkness and storm, they would assuredly make an attack as soon as the unsuspicious emigrants were locked in slumber.

So perfect was Carson's knowledge of Indian warfare, and so consummate his skill, that he not only made known the precise time when the onslaught would be attempted, but satisfied himself of the manner in which the approach would be made.

Some dozen of men were left in charge of the animals, to prevent a stampede during the confusion and to guard the females and children in case the savages should change their mode of attack. A hunter then, with one or two companions, passed a few hundred yards up stream to prevent surprise in that direction, while Carson, with thirty well-armed men, descended the bed of the creek, and waited for the attack that he was satisfied would soon be made. Here, hour after hour, they remained, invisible to each other, and hearing no sound but the monotonous patter of the rain, Carson now and then admonishing them in a cautious whisper to maintain silence, and be prepared at an instant's warning.

Toward midnight, a man crouching near Carson heard his cautious "sh!" and listening intently was satisfied he heard the stealthy approach of a foe. A second after, the famed mountaineer sprang to his feet with a wild yell, discharged his rifle, and called out to his followers to rush after him. The infuriated yells of the savages now mingled with their own, the discharge of firearms threw a momentary flash over the ghastly affray, and the emigrants were mingled in a desperate hand-to-hand conflict with nearly double their number.

The encounter was as short as it was terrible. The savages counted upon a surprise, and foiled in this, and meeting a surprise themselves, suffered a quick defeat. A score of them were left dead and dying upon the ground, while several of the whites were brought into the camp in a dying condition. Leaving them to their friends, Carson and the other hunters maintained their watch until morning. But the emigrants suffered no more molestation, and a few days after reached their destination in Oregon City, where Carson left them and returned to the States.

This incident was given me several years ago by a returned member of this emigrant party. He described the night attack more graphically than I have attempted, and his picture of this hunter and guide, whose name is familiar to every one, I shall never forget. He stated that he was a man rather below the medium height, of a light complexion, a slight beard, sandy hair, a mild eye, and with a pleasant, good-natured expression upon his countenance. Met in civilized society, he would be taken for the gentleman he was; met in an Indian fight, he would be recognized as the brave warrior he was at such times. Picture him on a wild mustang, a knife drawn in his hand, dashing furiously into a horde of yelling savages, and you will have a faint idea of this Hector of the Rocky Mountains.

DUCK FEVER.

BY OCCIDENTAL.

When I was a clerk in a Philadelphia counting-room, I used to read about duck shooting in the West, and long for a chance to enjoy such pleasure. It is true I had shadowy doubts as to a duck's ability to fly, never having seen any but the domestic bird, and no imagination of mine could lift a Muscovite to the regions of the ethereal blue.

Well, in time I moved out to the State of Wisconsin, which was, at the period I write about, farther west than it is now. Near the town I lived in was one of the thousand beautiful lakes that adorn the State, and about two miles up the shore of the lake was a little cove called "Thunder Bay," a famous resort for ducks of all kinds. I now knew that ducks *could* fly, for I had seen them in countless flocks migrating on swift, strong wings to the south.

I knew all about duck shooting—in so far as such knowledge could be derived from books—and I determined to make leisure of some day and gratify my pent-up longings to be "at them." I was not going to hunt like a fop or a novice, with unmitigated new shot belt and gleaming gun stock. I had read that some old hunters preferred for ducks and geese an old-fashioned United States musket, and accordingly I regarded myself as in high luck when one of those guns was offered to me for five dollars. It was a genuine United States musket, apparently of the pliocene period. It answered fully the description of what the "old hunters preferred," and I was rich in its possession.

I made known my project of a duck hunt to a famous Nimrod of the town, and he promised to join me any day I would appoint.

"What sized gun are you going to take?" said he.

"A trifle over five feet long," I replied, looking knowingly at him.

"But the gauge?" said he.

"Oh," I answered, winking at him, "you'll see my gun when we get there."

Now this was all perfectly correct, according to all I had read, for your real hunter (in the books) always looks knowing when *his* gun, or traps, or dog, is spoken of. To enwrap these or their qualities in a mystery, which only the exercise of those qualities could unveil; this I knew to be sportsmanlike, and this I did.

Behold us then on the appointed day sallying forth before dawn and groping our way through the mists of the lake shore towards Thunder Bay. It was absolutely my first hunt, and I could not entirely repress certain qualms of conscience when I reflected on the fearful waste of life that would result when *I began*. But all such thoughts were banished before the glorious vision of my person literally covered with ducks when I returned home. What then would a certain young Western beauty have to say about "green Eastern men?" The ducks must die! I would shoot only what I needed next time; but now, woe be to the mallards.

It was determined that I should proceed around to the other point of the entrance to the bay, where, as on this side, was good cover, and thus we would have *them* under a cross fire. The light was clear enough, when I started to go around the bay, to reveal us to one another, for hitherto we had been traveling in the dark, and my companion tried to detain me to look at my gun. But it was no use. I would let him look at the gun, when I had showed him what it could do with "an Eastern man" behind it. I could see the gleam from his No. 10 barrels, and even from his polished stock, and I pitied him as one who delighted in the looks, more than in the qualities of a piece.

I succeeded in reaching my post, but not before I had frightened up, and sent flying out of the bay, the thousands of ducks that were feeding there. Nothing but such a flock of ducks could make such a noise. It was deafening and confusing to me. But I found my cover, and lying down at full length, my ancient musket pointing towards the water, I waited in patience either the return of the frightened flock, or the coming of other ducks to take their place. I had not long to wait. The ducks could not stay away from the wild rice with which the bay abounded. An occasional splash announced the arrival of the bold first comers, and then the splashes grew more frequent, mixed with the "Quack! quack!" of the mallard and the notes of the various other kinds of duck, while almost at my side, but hidden in the reeds, a family of rails seemed to be warning their aquatic friends of the presence of an enemy. I cannot picture to you the state of excitement I was in. I could see them through the reeds cruising about, and they seemed quite near. I attempted to raise my gun, but it shook so in my hand that it was glad to rest it on the ground as I took aim. I was lying flat on the wet bed of reeds that formed my cover, my head, *a la* mud-turtle, slightly raised, left arm thrown forward, cheek-bone resting back of the breech of my piece, my right forefinger dallying with the trigger it longed to pull.

The position was perfect. Fortune favored me. A veritable mob of ducks gathered opposite me, and I determined to destroy them all. I was for the moment the very personification of ferocity. And yet I shook like one in an ague fit. I could no longer restrain myself. I pulled the trigger, and * * * * * *

A sweet, kind face was bending over me. In short my ancient gun in bursting had almost succeeded in including my head in that catastrophe.

My companion had found me lying in the reeds, utterly unconscious, and had carried me to the nearest house, which happened to be the home of the beautiful girl, whose pity for one "green Eastern man," ripened into something else, and accordingly I have only *grateful recollections* of my bursted old gun, and my fit of duck fever.

I use a ten inch gauge now, and am described as "the shootinest man in town." A flock of ducks can no longer excite me; but *one* the very pearl, queen, of ducks keeps me in a chronic fever.

ABOUT BACHELORS.

Pope—himself an old bachelor, and therefore speaking from experience—affords but little comfort to the brotherhood. He says:

Let sinful bachelors their woes deplore,
Full well they merit all they feel, and more.

The etymology of this word is anything but complimentary. Junius derives it from *bakslos*, foolish, and *menage*, from *vas chevalier*, a knight of the lowest order. It is supposed by some to be derived from *bacealaureus*, crowned with laurel berries. This is more dignified, certainly; but it reminds us of George Colman's words, in regard to Sir Thomas Erpringham, who returned from his wars in France crowned with laurels, and sat down in his solitary castle, all alone:

That sitting under laurels, all alone,
Is much more dignified than entertaining.

Legislators have done their utmost, since God created man, to compel this refractory class to fall into the ranks, like useful citizens, and obey the standing orders, recorded in the twenty-eighth verse of the first chapter of Genesis. The Roman censors tried old bachelors, as Satan advised the Lord to try Job, in their substance. They were fined, but to very little purpose.

Dion mentions an ancient law which compelled persons of full age to marry. In the time of Augustus, the *lex Julia maritandis ordaribus* was enacted, and old bachelors were handled without mittens. They were made incapable of taking legacies, and of inheriting, with certain exceptions. Thus, to employ a venerable pun, matrimony became, in a somewhat novel way, a matter of money; for Plutarch says the dread of losing these golden advantages drove many to marry—probably the less evil of the twain.

With the Hebrews, marriage at twenty was a matter of obligation. They gave a literal construction to the command in Genesis. Celibacy was accounted disgraceful—a cause for reproach. Women were willing to support themselves, if they could only get married, and remove the disgrace.

Lycurgus was rather hard upon old bachelors. By his laws they were accounted infamous, rendered ineligible to any office, civil or military, and forbidden to appear at the public shows or sports, unless to be led round the market-place by the women in derision. They were compelled to sing certain songs in ridicule of themselves.

In England, in 1696, the seventh year of William III, bachelors over twenty-five years of age were subject to an annual tax—£12 10s. for a duke, etc. In after time they taxed upon their servants. In turning over the leaves of William Hone's table book, we stumbled on this passage:

"There is a being who can never taste the exquisite joys of home—I mean the old bachelor. He returns to his lodging—there may be everything he can possibly desire in the shape of external comforts provided for him by the officious zeal of his housekeeper; but the air of chilling vacancy—the very atmosphere of the apartment has a dim, uninhabited appearance—the chairs, set around with provoking neatness, look provokingly useless and unoccupied. All is dreary and repelling. No gentle face welcomes his arrival, no loving hand meets his, no kind looks answer the listless gaze he throws around the apartment as he enters. He sits down to a book alone. There is no one sitting by his side to enjoy with him the favorite passage, the apt remark, the just criticism.

"And the——" We were about to finish transcribing this interesting passage, when, lifting our eyes across the street, we saw Caudle and his wife. She was leaning on one arm, and he was carrying her sick poodle on the other. Well, truly, thought we, as we shoved aside the volume and laid down our pen, there is much to be said on both sides of almost every question.

HONEST, upright and fearless conduct must needs have admirers, though many people are unable to perceive actual merit, because they live and move in a misty atmosphere of prejudice. No young man ought to be cast down because one or more of his acquaintances are inclined to reject him and underrate his merits. The time is sure to come when modest worth will meet the reward which is its due, and when the long-continued and patient aspirations for ambition will be qualified. If a young man is disliked and neglected by those from whom he ought to expect the best of treatment, let him remark that they are but one, or two, or three out of the millions of humanity. While there is life there is hope; and those who habitually ill treat others may be forced to solicit favors from the hands of those upon whom they have spent their superciliousness.

Correspondents' Bureau

☞ It is the intention to make this Department an attractive feature to all our readers. In addition to important and particular information for Subscribers, Contributors, and others, it will necessarily contain many novel, instructive and entertaining topics, fully discussed in answer to the numerous Notes and Queries contained in our general correspondence.

☞ All communications must be addressed to R. J. C. WALKER, Editor and Proprietor SATURDAY EVENING POST, No. 727 WALNUT Street, Philadelphia.

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TO CONTRIBUTORS.

Authors and others will take notice that, by rules of the P. O. Department, Manuscripts intended for publication in periodicals are subject to letter rates. Insufficiently stamped MSS. will not be taken out of the P. O. by us. Rejected MSS. will not be returned, unless by special request, with sufficient stamps enclosed to prepay postage.

Contributors are requested to write on only one side of the sheet, and to avoid the use of pale or fancy inks.

RESPECTFULLY DECLINED.—At the Grave. Long Ago. Waiting for Me. August. Sing of the North Wind. Ranz Des Vaches. Nora's Lover. The Bitter End. The Silver Mine. Musings. A Serenade.

TO GENERAL CORRESPONDENTS.

ARCTIC.—Captain Hall's vessel, the Polaris, went farthest north in the Arctic Ocean, though Hayes attained a higher degree of latitude in sleighs.

VIVIEN.—We are sorry to say your pieces did not come up to our standard. As to your question we really could not take it upon us to decide.

E. M. J.—A simple cure for warts is to dissolve a penny worth of sal ammoniac in a gill of soft water, and wet the warts frequently with the solution.

W. W.—For dyeing the skin without injuring it in the least, we know of nothing better than walnut juice. Boil the fruit just as you pluck it from the tree, and use the decoction for the required purpose.

SMOKER.—"Is amber found in this country, and, if so, where?" Yes; it has been found in different places in this country, as for instance, Amboy, N. J.; at Sag Head, Martha's Vineyard; and at Cape Sable, in Maryland.

H. A. B.—To stuff birds properly and artistically requires one to have a knowledge of the anatomy and conformation of the subject. A mere technical knowledge of the art, unless it is combined with the other, will never make you a skilful taxidermist.

R. N. N.—If the black specks which you say you see floating before your eyes, float before both eyes, then we should say they are caused by indigestion; but if they float before only one, we should recommend you to consult some surgeon-oculist as soon as possible.

DAISY.—Eighteen months' courtship, provided the parties are in a condition to bear the expenses of married life, is quite long enough, in our opinion. During that time the gentleman and lady must have had constant opportunities for judging each other's tempers, habits, etc.

WAGER.—"To settle a dispute, can you give me the exact area of Scotland, England, Ireland and Wales, respectively?" Scotland, 31,324 square miles; England, 50,755; Ireland, 32,512; and Wales, 7,209. The greatest length of England is 366 miles; the greatest breadth, 280 miles.

F. B. C.—A great deal depends upon the circumstances of the case. As a general rule, it would not be considered at all proper for a young lady to invite a gentleman to visit her whom she has met for the first time at a friend's house, more especially so if she knows nothing whatever regarding him or his antecedents.

EARNEST INQUIRER.—We never heard such an expression before as the one you quote, so cannot tell you anything about how it originated. 2. To take stains of marking ink out of cloth, apply a saturated solution of cyanuret of potassium with a camel's hair brush. After the ink stains disappear, the linen should be well washed in cold water.

M. E. F.—We regard book-keeping as a very suitable and honest way for any worthy young woman to earn her living. How it might answer for "a lady," we do not feel prepared to decide. "Ladies," as such, are composed of such diverse intellectual materials that what one might regard as eminently right, another might look upon as degrading.

LOUISE RANDOLPH.—We regret that it is impossible for us to comply with the request of your friend and republish a story which you say you read a good many years ago in another paper. The only way to get it is to send to the office of the said paper, but most likely it is now out of print. We will endeavor and say a few words soon on the subject you speak of.

PUZZLER.—"Suppose a train moving at the rate of thirty miles an hour: on the rear platform is a cannon aimed parallel with the track, and in a direction precisely opposite to the motion of the car; let a ball be discharged with the exact speed of the train, where would it fall?" In a vertical line to the track. The two equal, opposite motions would exactly destroy each other.

FORSAKEN ONE.—You have but one course consistent with propriety to adopt, and your own proper sense of pride ought also to suggest the same mode of behavior, namely: To discard the fickle and faithless young man from your thoughts, and avoid as much as possible the chance of meeting him. But if you should happen to meet, as you are afraid you may sometimes, you should meet him as a perfect stranger.

J. F. F. (An Old Subscriber).—It often happens that, notwithstanding all possible care and precaution on our part and all the facilities of Uncle Sam's mail, some numbers of the POST fail to reach some one of our subscribers. Whenever this does happen, if you will only write and let us know, we will re-mail the missing number, so that your file may be kept intact.

MILLIE.—If the hour be not late, and the gentleman not a total stranger to your family, there would be no impropriety in your inviting him in, after he has accompanied you home from an evening party. If, however, he is a stranger, it would be better for you to simply thank him for his kindness in having seen you home. This is all that etiquette would ever require in such a case.

J. B. W. (Atlanta).—Your remarks are very sensible, and we agree with you; but we are sorry we cannot discuss the matter which has so disturbed your equanimity in the columns of the POST. Although not exactly what may be called a political question, still it so very nearly approaches to it that it would be impossible for us to consider it for a moment. Your paper will be forwarded as directed.

TRUE BLUE.—With reference to a reason given in a late number as to why the epithet "true blue" is sometimes bestowed upon Presbyterians, a correspondent has given us another explanation: The distinct dress of the Scotch Presbyterian clergy was a blue gown and broad blue bonnet. The Episcopalian clergy, on the other hand, either wore no distinctive dress in public services, or else wore a black gown. From this arose the term "True Blue Presbyterianism."

C. F. W.—You say that you wish to discontinue a correspondence which you have been carrying on for some time with a lady, but do not know how to do so properly and "without hurting her feelings." There is only one way of accomplishing this honorably, and that is to write to her the truth. Be candid, honest and truthful with her, more especially so as you commenced the correspondence, and must not on any account abruptly stop it without giving some reason or some explanation.

MINNIE.—We can only reiterate your mother's opinion and advice, that at sixteen you are too young to be thinking of any such things as "keeping company" and "having a beau," and all such nonsense. Just let the young gentleman know this, or if you have not the courage to do so, get your mother to do it for you. 2. No, we think it anything but "fair" for any young man to keep company with two young ladies at the same time. Of course, after your first question, we cannot for a moment suppose that this latter one has any personal reference to your own case.

AN OLD SUBSCRIBER.—Yes; George Sand's works are obtainable translated into English. We have before us a list of ten, all of which we can get for you for $10, exclusive of postage. 2. In answer to the "inevitable" question, as you call it, we have no fault to find in either the handwriting or composition of your letter.

C. H. M.—It was very foolish in you to be so quick in taking offence, and all because your lady friend did not answer your letter quite as quickly as she might have done and as you expected her to do. You find this out now when you have received her letter, and want to know what you should do to get over the consequences of your rashness. You should write to the lady at once, saying how very hasty and foolish you were, and asking whether she will not forgive you, and allow the correspondence to continue as before.

G. B. G.—It is a matter on which many persons differ, whether lying with the head raised or even with the body be the more wholesome mode of sleeping. Most, consulting their own ease on this point, argue in favor of that which they prefer. Now, although many delight in bolstering up their heads at night, and sleep soundly without injury, yet we are of opinion that it is a dangerous habit. The vessels through which the blood passes from the heart to the head are always lessened when the head is resting in bed higher than the body; therefore, in all diseases attended with fever, the head should be pretty nearly on a level with the body.

ENGAGED.—"I notice that you say there is no fixed rule in this country as to which finger is the proper one for the engagement ring, and I believe you are right, for I see some ladies, who I knew are engaged, wearing it on one finger, and others on another. I was having an argument with a friend who, like myself, comes from England, and we could not agree about which finger was considered the proper one for an engagement ring in England. Can you decide for us?" The third finger on the right hand is the one that is at present set apart for that purpose. There is no particular kind of ring settled for an engaged young lady; a fancy ring set with emeralds and diamonds is considered a very pretty and appropriate one.

G. W. S.—We know nothing about you or your qualifications. We are not in a position to be able to advise you as to whether you would do better in the South than in your own State. But we can say that, as a general rule, one can do better in any line of business, or in any trade or occupation, at home than he can elsewhere. At home he has friends, he is known, and he has established a character—all three most valuable essentials toward success, and which one must miss in a new place. It may take years, too, to acquire them. We don't say but that there are exceptions to this rule, as there are to every rule. Whether yours is one of these exceptional cases we cannot, however, say, as you have told us almost nothing about yourself.

ZETA.—You have read the POST to very little account indeed, we must say, if you have failed to find in the recent issues some advice that specially meets your case, for we remember to have answered at least one correspondent who was somewhat similarly fixed as yourself. You say you are keeping company with a young man who is a little more demonstrative than you could wish; but, as you attribute it to his naturally affectionate nature, you hesitate to speak about it to him "for fear of hurting his feelings," and want to know what you should do. If you have more respect for his feelings than you have for your own, why then you may be right in hesitating, and we have nothing more to say about it. But you don't tell us in what way his excessive demonstrativeness, the result of his "naturally affectionate disposition," is exhibited; and this very important omission on your part renders it impossible to answer your question advisedly.

BROKEN HEART.—Yours is a very sad case, indeed, and we can see you are in very great danger of again being carried away by the infatuated love which you still have for the man who has proved so unworthy in every way of it. The extremely delicate nature of your case, however, will not permit of us answering you except in a very general kind of a way. Indeed, we are much afraid that advice will be utterly thrown away on you, for, except you conquer and thoroughly root out of your heart the present feelings you entertain for the man, and learn to look upon him with that abhorrence and aversion which so dishonored and perjured a wretch justly deserves, you are never safe, and may any day again lapse into your former disgraceful condition. Your only hope of safety from the fate which you so dread is to have nothing more to say to him henceforth and forever, and to take every measure in your power, even to leaving your home, if such be absolutely necessary, in order to avoid meeting or seeing him, until you have learned to hate him as much as you now love him.

RUSTIC.—"Can you help us in any way to learn how to make those pretty straw picture-frames which one sees so often. They seem easy enough to make, but just how we don't know, and nobody will tell us?" If you live in the country, you can procure straw of the farmers; if in the city, you can purchase it at the fancy stores, in little bundles. Rye straw is the best. Take your picture, and if there is sufficient margin sew your straws on that; if no margin, or too little, you can make, very easily, by the aid of a little pasteboard and a pair of scissors, a frame, say a little more than half an inch wide all around, on which to sew the straw, and when complete, fasten it upon the picture. Five straws, placed parallel at each side and at each end of the picture, or the frame, as the case may be, with both ends of each straw about an inch and a half longer than the picture, if it be of small size; longer, of course, in proportion, for a larger one. After the sides and ends are completed, sew cross-pieces on each corner, in imitation of rustic frames. With a sharp knife trim each projecting end into a V shape. To conceal the stitches, sew on each corner, on top of the cross-pieces, a bow of narrow, dark blue satin ribbon; make a loop of the same, whereby to suspend your picture, and your work is complete.

S. H. M. (New Hope).—No wonder that you dislike history, as you say you do, seeing that you acknowledge to having studied it only in the abridgements used in schools. If you would read the voluminous accounts given of the same events, and which are shunned by so many young people as a heavy task, you would find them infinitely more entertaining. The more you read about history, the more interested you will become; at least such is our experience, and that of most other persons, we feel sure. When you are familiar with certain scenes and characters, you will wish to know additional particulars regarding them, and you will find yourself gradually led on into a course of reading which at present you look upon as "awfully dry stuff." As to recommending a list of books for you to read, we are sorry we cannot help you, as no course of reading can be pointed out which would suit the minds of all equally well, or be accessible to the generality of readers. Many must be satisfied with what the scanty libraries around them will supply; but such may comfort themselves with the reflection that a few books thoroughly studied do as more good than a hasty, careless perusal of many volumes. Your course of reading should be partly determined by the interest excited in your mind by accidental circumstances and conversations. When you have been hearing, for instance, a discussion of the merits of any standard book, that is the time to read it, while your mind is still alive to the subject. If you are introduced to any one who has seen foreign countries, and who talks of scenes and manners that are new to you, follow up the impression by reading all you can find that relates to those subjects.

MISCELLANEOUS.—A. B. C.—A lad of seventeen is not too old to be cured of knock-kneed, which may only arise from the weakness of a youth growing too fast. INQUISITIVE.—Your own good sense ought to tell you that it is very wrong for a young lady to correspond with a married man in a clandestine manner. A CONSTANT READER.—We know nothing regarding the institution you mention. NEMO.—It is a business that must be learnt, and cannot be described in print. J. J.—It is wrong to say "you was;" you should say "you were." "You" is plural, though applied to only one person. C. W.—We do not think you would do any good by going to law in such a case, and would advise you to try and make it up privately. SAMMY.—When a gentleman is introduced to a lady, it is not consistent with etiquette to shake hands. The shaking of hands implies a certain degree of friendliness or intimacy. ADA.—Send an envelope ready addressed and stamped, and we will cheerfully give you the desired information through the mail. F. N.—The subjects you mention are not included in the work alluded to. G. P.—It is now too late to make the claim. ELLIE.—It is a case of too delicate and purely personal a character for us to venture to advise upon. R. H.—All the advice we can give you is to continue to act in deference to the wishes of your parents, who no doubt are the best judges in the matter. X. Y. Z.—Where there is no natural tendency for the growth of moustache and whiskers, no external application in the world will produce them. ANNIE.—There is no kind of enamel that is not injurious to the skin. All such applications are to be avoided. C. B. W.—The word "Resurgam" on tombstones is a Latin one, and signifies "I shall rise again." LILLIE.—We cannot possibly form any opinion or give you any definite reply unless we saw the sketches. M. E. W.—The process is far too lengthy and complicated for us to give you here. J. P. M.—Unless you can get the parents to relent and give their consent, your case seems a hopeless one. BLONDE.—The hair inclines to a golden hue. C. L. P.—Any bookseller will furnish you with the sort of book you want. W. E. C.—We never insert such advertisements in our columns.

☞ *A number of communications have been received, which will be answered next week.*